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ABSTRACT

The use of microteaching in Britain to train teachers of English as a second language is described. Microteaching is defined as a teaching encounter that is scaled down in terms of class sizes, lesson length, and teaching complexity. Based on visits and observations, the organization, content, goals, and components of British microteaching programs are summarized. The content of general and language preservice microteaching programs is discussed in terms of variation, reinforcement, and questioning. Most of the programs establish a model of good teaching and aim to inform students about the procedures and techniques of the model. The microteaching program components of briefing sessions, critique sessions, reteach sessions, and transitional microteaching are examined in terms of exemplification, negative modeling, feedback, and the roles of teachers, peers, and pupils. (RW)

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WORKING DOCUMENTS 3

Microteaching

Current practice in Britain with special reference to ESOL

by John Stoddart

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Microteaching

An extract from

Current developments in Teacher-Education Procedures and Techniques in Britain and their Relevance to the Preparation of English Teachers Overseas

Report by John Dennis Stoddart

This Working Document is a part of Associateship report submitted in 1978.

It represents a record of a number of visits and discussions made by John Stoddart during his year of study on the Associateship programme. It's aim is to provide a description of current practice in microteaching in Britain at the time with special reference to the use of microteaching to train teachers of English as a foreign or second language. There is no attempt to evaluate the use of microteaching but it provides a valuable insight into the way various teacher training institutes have been developing their use of microteaching.

WORKING DOCUMENTS

1 Microteaching in EFL TT
  Edited by Cripwell and Geddes
  1978 (£1)

2 Literature in EFL
  1980 (£1)

3 Microteaching; current practice in Britain with special reference to EFL
  John Stoddart
  1981 (£1)

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4 Tests and Examinations
  Edited by Peter Hill
  July 1981

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MICROTEACHING

A major problem when considering this subject is to define the limits of what we would regard as microteaching. For instance, one private EFL teacher-training institution which I visited had what it called a micro-teaching programme but this consisted of two students each teaching half of a regular 1½ lesson to a class of eight adults, this being followed by discussion with a tutor. Not many, I feel, would consider this to be 'microteaching'. But along what parameters do we classify microteaching and what is the cut-off point along each? As Brown (1975b) says, there have been so many variations in approach to microteaching since the original Stanford model that now "the term 'microteaching' is generic rather than specific". It is perhaps convenient not to be more precise than is McAleese (1973) when he says that microteaching is "a scaled down teaching encounter, scaled down in terms of class size, lesson length and teaching complexity".* What else microteaching may embrace, will, I hope, become apparent from the account in this section of the various manifestations of it which I encountered during my visits to institutions that said they conducted microteaching programmes. We shall look at some general aspects of these programmes within Britain (2.1) and then at particular components in such programmes (2.2).**

2.1 General aspects of British microteaching programmes

2.1.1 The organisation of programmes

Since there is no general agreement as to what microteaching is, it is difficult to estimate how widespread it is in British teacher-training institutions. Moreover, even if we arbitrarily define what we mean by microteaching, the fact that a particular institution says that this kind of activity occurs there does not indicate on what scale this is so. Perhaps it involves all the students throughout the institution or perhaps just a handful with one particular tutor who favours microteaching. It is considerations of this kind which make nonsense of many of the surveys to determine the extent of microteaching in Britain.* The impression I gained from my own visits was that there were far more individual tutors not using the procedure than there were using it. A variety of 'reasons' was given for not doing so. These ranged from 'not enough time' (which surely means that microteaching is not considered to be of any great value) to a variety of pedagogical reasons. Tutor said among other things that they disliked its 'artificiality', its supposed behaviourist rationale, its tendency to force students into a common mould, its emphasis on specification of precise objectives and rigid lesson planning (which they considered inappropriate in subjects - such as humanities - where the teacher needs to be free to respond to developing situations guided only by certain general principles of procedure), its laying too much emphasis on proficiency in 'mere' technical skills to the detriment of developing what they felt was really important in a teacher namely appropriate attitudes and ideals. In fact, some institutions as a whole - or particular tutors within an institution - said they had abandoned microteaching because they felt students did not improve more by it than by traditional procedures (while in one institution it was the students themselves who had decided they did not wish the microteaching programme to continue).

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* We do however need to distinguish between those 'scaled down teaching encounters' the main purpose of which is to develop proficiency in certain specific teaching behaviours ('microteaching') from those other 'scaled down teaching encounters' in initial teacher-education courses the main aim of which is to help students develop an understanding of individual children and achieve a suitable personal relationship with them. Although many British institutions do not have 'microteaching', they do provide this other kind of experience (see 3.1.1.2).

** Any study of microteaching programmes in Britain with reference to ELT can, of course, only be of an interim nature pending the findings of the project by the Scottish Centre for Education Overseas at Moray House, which is concerned with "Applications of microteaching to the teaching of English as a second or foreign language in teacher-training situations" (and of which M J Wallace is the Research Officer). The project - which started in October 1978 and will last for three years - will include the analysis and evaluation of current TEFL/TESL microteaching programmes at Moray House, experimentation with new and refinement of existing microteaching procedures; the possible analysis of language teaching skills or topics which have been found amenable to a microteaching approach; experimentation into microteaching without hardware; and an investigation of the present state of microteaching in developing countries. This - mainly informational - phase may be followed by a further three-year period devoted to the production of a handbook of microteaching procedures for the use of teacher-training institutions in developing countries (which would include sections on the use of microteaching techniques without hardware in TESL/TEFL).

Nevertheless, there is a considerable amount of microteaching going on, with some institutions like the University of Manchester Department of Education about to implement a full-scale programme and others, such as Dundee College of Education and Bulmershe College of Higher Education, intending considerable expansion of existing programmes. In considering microteaching in preservice programmes in Britain, a major distinction is apparent between those institutions where microteaching is organised as a whole across the disciplines by 'professional studies' departments, and those other institutions where microteaching is conducted within certain subject departments. Institutions of the first kind which I visited included the University of Stirling, the New University of Ulster, Ulster Polytechnic, Dundee College of Education, and Bulmershe College of Higher Education at Reading. Institutions of the second kind were mainly postgraduate Departments of Education where an FL/ELT subject department - or in some cases just a particular tutor within such a department - organises a microteaching programme for certain students.* It was possible for some pre-service students at Stirling and the New University of Ulster to participate in both the general microteaching programme arranged by the 'professional studies' department, as well as in one organised by their subject tutor on his/her own initiative during his methods seminar time.**

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* For instance, Bhushan (1976) who surveyed 56 English and Welsh institutions in April 1975 by postal questionnaire reports that "Microteaching in one form or another seems to have become generally accepted as a pattern of classroom behaviour modification". Similarly Maidment and Hargie who conducted a survey of microteaching in the UK about the same time report that over 50% of teacher-training institutions were involved in microteaching. On the other hand, Kennedy (1975) says that few institutions in Britain have incorporated it into their general programme of professional education!

In most of the pre-service institutions or subject departments which I visited, the microteaching is conducted in the period prior to the first - or only - period of block teaching practice. It is usual for the period of teaching practice to follow fairly soon after the microteaching for obvious reasons (although at present at the New University of Ulster the majority of students have microteaching in their third semester while their first - and only - block teaching practice takes place in the eighth semester). On the other hand, at Bulmershe microteaching has been shifted mainly for administrative reasons from before teaching practice in the first year to the last two terms of the fourth and final year, by which time students have undertaken all their teaching practices. Nevertheless the tutor in charge feels that the students benefit considerably from it then, especially since by that time they have sufficient practical teaching experience to enable them to be much more aware of the relationship of theory to practice when undertaking microteaching.*

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* FL departments visited included those in the University of Bristol School of Education, the University of Hull Department of Educational Studies, the University of Keele Department of Education, the University of Liverpool School of Education, and the University of York Language Teaching Centre; while ELT departments included those at the University College of Wales Aberystwyth Department of Education and the University of London Institute of Education. In addition I also looked at the use of microteaching in a number of ELT courses intended for experienced teachers both British and from overseas i.e at the University of Leeds Overseas Education Unit, the Moray House Scottish Centre for Education Overseas, and the London Institute. (In the rest of this section, place names only will be used in referring to various courses in the above institutions unless there is a possibility of confusion.) In several other institutions that I visited, microteaching was being - or had been - practised (e.g. Callendar Park College of Education, Jordanhill College of Education, University of Nottingham School of Education, University of Warwick Faculty of Educational Studies (formerly Coventry College of Education), International Teacher Training Institute London); reference to these programmes will also be made occasionally in the discussion which follows.

** On the other hand, as well as tutors in these institutions who are obviously so strongly in favour of microteaching that they supplement the general programme by an additional one of their own, there are also some who are not in favour of microteaching but who are required to act as supervisors in the general programme because of student numbers. For instance, at the New University of Ulster over 35 tutors are required to service the 150 or more students engaged simultaneously in the general microteaching programme. At both the New University of Ulster and Stirling there have been problems with tutors who have been unwilling to act as microteaching supervisors.

In a few other institutions, microteaching is practised both before teaching practice and also - in the case of certain students who have shown noticeable weaknesses during their practice - afterwards as a remedial measure. Kelly (1973) describes the improvements effected in the teaching of third-year students at Coventry College of Education who were approaching final school practice but whose performance in second school practice had been so poor as to indicate the possibility of failure. On the University of Nottingham PGCE course, microteaching is an 'optional' activity in Term 3 for students who are at risk after their block practice in Term 2, as well as for those who have passed it but nevertheless have particular weaknesses. The University of Warwick's new PGCE course envisages the use of microteaching in Term 2 between the 'split' teaching practices of Terms 1 and 3 for students with demonstrable weaknesses. At the New University of Ulster, a working party is currently considering the possibility of having some initial microteaching in Semester 1 with a first block teaching practice at the beginning of Semester 3 followed by a 'remedial' microteaching programme later in that semester (although the final block teaching practice would still come in Semester 8). Professor E C Wragg at Nottingham told me that originally he had felt it inadvisable to subject weak students to such measures lest it make them feel inferior but that he had come round to it following complaints by such students that nothing was being done to help them. Certainly, as Kelly (1973) points out, the only alternative for students at risk is an extra period of school practice, when "due to the difficulties of providing adequate supervision, the weak student all too often spends his time in class reinforcing his faults and perfecting the weaknesses which the extra practice is intended to eradicate". And although his own students who were singled out for 'remedial' microteaching "ranged from the apathetic, through the hurt and distrustful to the outright hostile, yet within two or three weeks there was a remarkable upsurge of enthusiasm. Indeed, from other students not involved came requests for their inclusion in extended or future sessions..."

Obviously there is need for a good deal of experimentation to determine when microteaching might most profitably be used in pre-service training courses. In a course which has only one block teaching practice, microteaching might be used both as a preparation for this for all students in an institution or subject department, and also for 'remedial' purposes afterwards with certain students. In a course which includes several periods of block teaching practice, there might be remedial microteaching sessions for certain students after each such period, as well as preparatory microteaching sessions before each one in which new skills could be progressively introduced. At the same time the nature of the sessions might become increasingly 'exploratory' (see 2.1.3). An additional possibility is the inclusion of microteaching sessions during periods of teaching practice. At Jordanhill, for instance, the History Department has experimented with withdrawing students for a couple of days during their teaching practice for intensive microteaching sessions. Admittedly, in this particular case it was done because time was reportedly not available for microteaching during the previous part of the course. Nevertheless the arrangement does suggest the possibility of microteaching also being scheduled in this way so that students, who thus experience it in the middle of practical teaching, would realise its relevance and be able to put into immediate use with their regular classes whatever they practised in the microteaching sessions (opportunity for immediate use is, indeed, one of the reasons why Perrott feels her self-instructional microteaching course Effective Questioning is so successful with practising teachers).

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* In the University of London Institute of Education PGCE EFL course, although microteaching takes place after the Term 1 block practice with immigrant children in Britain, it is intended not as a follow-up to that ESL practice but as a preparation for the Term 2 EFL block practice in Spain. Originally microteaching occurred before the first practice but it was found that the EFL procedures practised tended to be used inappropriately by students in their subsequent immigrant ESL teaching practice.

Whether the microteaching programmes considered are arranged before, during and/or after periods of teaching practice, the amount of time spent by a student in microteaching activities varies widely from one institution to another and/or from one subject department to another within the same institution. In institutions such as Stirling, the New University of Ulster and Ulster Polytechnic where microteaching is given a great deal of importance, a student will devote some 40-60 class hours to it during his course; whereas within those PGCE FL/ELT subject departments visited the average amount of time is more nearly 10 class hours overall (in some it is considerably less).* As Perrott (1977) says: "....the amount of time which it is feasible to allocate to microteaching in pre-service programmes is usually sufficient only for an introduction to microteaching techniques. These are best regarded as the first stage in a long-term training strategy including teaching practice, induction and in-service training."

Most microteaching programmes are spread over a number of weeks with a regular session or sessions (which may total between one to four class hours) each week. For instance, at Ulster Polytechnic students spend roughly four hours a week for 15 weeks on microteaching activities, while at the New University of Ulster the figure is more like three to four hours a week for 11 or 12 weeks; on the other hand, some pre-service FL/ELT microteaching courses may consist of no more than one hour a week for as few as four weeks. In a couple of institutions, however, microteaching activities take a 'block' form: for instance, at the University of London Institute of Education the PGCE ELT microteaching is conducted during a continuous period of six days with some three class hours per day and the rest of the time allowed for preparation, while the Diploma ELT microteaching programme runs for nine consecutive days in the same way. One of the reasons for such a 'block' arrangement is the degree of concentration it produce on practical teaching activities. On the other hand, it may well prove too intensive and demanding (in fact the Diploma ELT microteaching programme was reduced this year from 12 to 9 days because it was found that students were flagging towards the end of the longer period). In addition, there is a possible danger that the 'block' arrangement may lead to a feeling amongst students that the practical teaching is something to be done and got out of the way rather than as something which affords a continuing means of relating theory to practice. Obviously there is need for experimentation to determine the advantages and disadvantages of varying degrees of intensity in microteaching programmes.

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* A major exception is in the (basically) pre-service course for Saudi Arabian students mounted at Moray House in which some 40 class hours are devoted to microteaching. A similar number also occurs on the in-service PG Diploma in Linguistics and English Language Teaching course at Moray House.

2.1.2 The content of programmes

Microteaching programmes within teacher-training institutions in Britain, as we have seen, appear to fall into two main categories. There are those programmes which concentrate on general teaching skills and those which are concerned primarily with the particular skills needed to teach specific subjects. The former are found largely in those institutions where microteaching is organised on an interdisciplinary basis by 'professional studies' departments, while the latter are found most often where microteaching is conducted within separate subject departments with students who will ultimately be subject teachers in secondary schools or other institutions.

(a) General microteaching programmes

At Stirling, the New University of Ulster, Ulster Polytechnic, Dundee and Bulmershe where the microteaching is organised on an interdisciplinary basis, the programmes are concerned with those general teaching skills that are considered to be applicable at many levels and for teaching many different subjects. The skills practised derive from those identified at Stanford as particularly useful for effective teaching, each one having a recognizable psychological basis in some aspect of learning theory and consisting of a set of related teaching behaviours.*

Of course, there has been criticism of the skills identified at Stanford, which points out that they are not necessarily the most effective nor may all of them even be necessary for effective teaching. As Berliner (1969) has said, in addition to identifying other skills if possible, we need to determine the validity of those skills that have so far been identified. This should be done by etablishing what effect teacher behaviour has on pupils cognitively, affectively and as regards the acquisition of skills. Brown (1975a) also feels that the skills should be judged by their effect on pupils: "Producing changes in teaching behaviour is not enough. Teaching pupil learning and attitudes." It would almost certainly be agreed by all concerned that the skills practised in current general microteaching programmes are chosen largely on the basis of intuition. Moreover, this is likely to be true for some time to come. Hargie (1977) points out the lack of research in this field because of the many problems involved, especially that of determining what part of any pupil learning is attributable to the teacher.

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* These skills were originally identified from careful observation of classroom teaching, and on the assumption that the complex behaviour of teaching can be broken down into its component parts. At a conference held at Stanford in 1967, the following 18 skills were identified: establishing set, establishing appropriate frames of reference, achieving closure, recognising and obtaining attending behaviour, obtaining feedback, reinforcement, redundancy and repetition, control of participation, illustrating and use of examples, asking questions, use of higher order questions, use of probing questions, use of silence and non-verbal cues, getting pupils to initiate questions, completeness of communication, varying the stimulus, lecturing, and pre-cueing.

In the institutions visited, a very wide range of general teaching skills are practised under a variety of different names and in different groupings. For instance, what are considered separate skills in one institution may be treated as subskills of the same skill in another or even as subskills of two different skills. Nevertheless for the purpose of this report it is possible to list most of the skills being practised within one of three categories: Variation, Reinforcement and Questioning.

(i) Variation. This would embrace all those skills by which a teacher can secure and maintain the attention of his pupils, including both personal and organisational activities. By 'personal' are meant such activities as purposeful movement from one place to another by the teacher; purposeful gesture by the teacher to direct attention, emphasize importance of points, express emotions, indicate shapes, sizes, movements, etc; sudden or radical changes in tone, volume, or speed of the teacher's speech; silence; facial expressions and eye-contact. By 'organisational' are meant such variations as changing the sense channels which pupils are required to use (e.g. changing from listening to looking, from discussion to manual activity, from reading to writing); changing the focus within one channel (e.g. from blackboard work to a film, from the teacher talking to the use of an audiotape); ensuring sufficient introduction of pupil talk, pupil movement and physical participation; and incorporating different kinds of interaction (such a that of teacher and groups of pupils, teacher and individual pupils, pupils and pupils).

(ii) Reinforcement. This would embrace all those skills by which a teacher can encourage and ensure the continuation of pupil contributions. In some institutions, 'reinforcement' covers activities such as positive verbal reinforcement, non-verbal reinforcement, and also perhaps such other subskills as the reinforcement of the acceptable part of a pupil response and how to correct an incorrect response in an encouraging manner. Other institutions - notably Stirling - have extended the skill and renamed it 'Reacting'. By this they also cover those occasions when a teacher does not simply accept pupils' contributions but uses them to further the lesson in various ways. For instance a pupil's idea may be discussed, clarified and related to other ideas; in addition, it may actually be used by the teacher to forward the general discussion, e.g. by posing a new question based on it or by using it to solve a problem or argument or to lead on to new ideas.

(iii) Questioning. This is concerned with the ways in which a teacher can stimulate his pupils' thinking by choosing questions of a suitable kind as regard level and form. The focus on questions at different levels means that programmes endeavour to encourage the use not just of lower-order questions (i.e. ones which simply require a recall of knowledge) but more especially of middle- and higher-order questions. Middle-order questions require the pupils to apply known techniques and rules to solve problems, while higher-order questions lead them to go beyond what they know and to make use of their mental faculties to analyse, synthesise and evaluate. Programmes that consider the form of questioning are largely concerned with the ability of the teacher to follow-up discerningly the questions he asks by means of prompts, probes and redirections, i.e. by modifying a question if it proves too difficult in its original form; by asking a pupil to clarify, elaborate or substantiate his answer if necessary; and by redirecting a pupil's response to other pupils or the class in general for comment and discussion. A couple of institutions practise other aspects of questioning. They pick out for attention the need to use simple language in questions and to distribute questions discriminatingly; the value of pausing to allow thoughtful responses; the need for the teacher to avoid repeating his own questions and pupils' answers; and also 'focussing' by which is meant asking follow-up questions to help pupils see the relation between two points.*

As well as Variation, Reinforcement/Reacting, and Questioning, other general teaching skills fairly widely practised are Set Induction and Closure. The first is concerned with ways of introducing a lesson or a new topic within a lesson. It focusses on how this can be done so as not only to interest the pupils in what is to follow (perceptual set) but also to help establish what they already know and to link this with what is to follow (cognitive set). The second is concerned with ways of rounding off a lesson or topic - its perceptual and its cognitive closure. It stresses the need not only to reinforce the pupils' interest in the new lesson or topic when closing but also to recapitulate what has been learned and to make connections between this, whatever previous knowledge (or skill) they had and any future lesson on the same or a related topic.

(b) Language-microteaching programmes

In only one of the FL/ELT departments visited which conduct microteaching was the programme concerned with general teaching skills (when the tutor concerned concentrates principally on certain 'Variation' features such as movement, facial expression, stance and gesture, which he feels are essential for any successful teaching). In all the other departments, the microteaching was of a subject-specific nature i.e. each of the topics which form the various programmes specifies a segment of work within a possible FL/ELT lesson, and students concentrate on the procedures and techniques appropriate in the teaching of these lesson segments to particular pupils or role-playing peers. For instance, as the handout to students on the London Institute's Diploma in TEFL course says: "The aim of the microteaching exercise is to allow focussing on specific classroom skills relevant to particular parts of different types of lesson".*

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* The importance of questioning is seen in Perrott's recent self-instructional microteaching course entitled Effective Questioning, which consists of four main sections: (1) encouraging pupils' responses (through pausing to encourage thoughtful responses, handling incorrect responses sympathetically, and calling on non-volunteers) (2) improving inadequate pupils' responses (through prompting, seeking clarification, and refocussing) (3) improving the amount and quality of pupils' participation (through redirection, questions calling for sets of related facts, and higher-order questions) (4) eliminating habits which interrupt classroom discussion (e.g. repeating one's own questions, answering one's own questions, repeating pupils' answers).

Some examples of the kinds of FL/ELT microteaching topics set are given below. Very frequent are ones which involve the oral presentation and practice of grammatical items e.g.

> "Present a structure - elementary level - using visuals. The structure may be related to a simpler known structure."
>
> "Present the following structures (one per student):....Each presentation should contain at least six situations. These situations should be linked into a set. You should use repetitions in the presentation."
>
> "Practice a structure by building a pictorial context - blackboard drawing, cut-outs, etc - which can be appropriately manipulated to give the necessary practice."
>
> "Drill the structure you presented (the previous day) using (one per student): double substitution, forced change substitution, multiple substitution, question and answer, single substitution."
>
> "Give (a) imitative practice (b) controlled practice (c) communicative practice in respect of the structure you presented yesterday, using the standard range of drills."

Also very frequent is the presentation and practice of lexical items e.g.

> "Present in context a four/five item lexical set, using realia or visual aids (secondary beginners level)."
>
> "Teach 6-10 lexical items in a set in an exotic language. Medium (one per student): blackboard only; OHP; flashcards; cut-outs and blackboard; realia."
>
> "Preteach key lexical items from a reading or listening text"

and of phonological items e.g.

> "Practise a segmental or suprasegmental pronunciation point, using visual aids to assist you (Adult beginners)."
>
> "Use a minimal pair drill to give recognition practice in two vowels or consonants which pupils confuse."

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* Only in one FL department were some of the 'subject specific' microteaching topics specified in 'skill' - as opposed to lesson segment - terms e.g. 'Writing on the blackboard', 'Drawing on the blackboard', 'Using a taperecorder/OHP/filmstrip-slide projector', with students being left free to decide in what type of lesson segment they will incorporate the skill (c.f. Phillips (1975) who lists some of the skills practised on his microteaching course with in-service Greek-Cypriot teachers as 'The use of models', 'The use of puppets', 'The use of flashcards', 'The use of blackboard matchstick figures', 'Groupwork using picture cards and realia', etc).

Also frequent are microteaching topics which require a student teacher to tell stories, develop dialogues with his pupils, or conduct language games:

> "Tell a story concentrating on the use of gesture."
>
> "Tell a short story or narrative, contextualising a structural point, using mime, realia or visuals (primary, any level)."
>
> "Get pupils to build a short dialogue, suggested by either a picture or picture sequence or situation where X persuades Y to do something (e.g. patient persuades doctor to visit him at home) (adult intermediate)."
>
> "Elicit from an intermediate adult class a dialogue in which the function of seeking permission is prominent."
>
> "Conduct a language game. Pay attention to your introduction/explanation."
>
> "Prepare and operate a lexis-based language game suitable for use with a class of 30."

All the above topics involve oral language practice. Very few of the FL/ELT microteaching programmes looked at included many - if any - topics involving practice in reading (and still less, writing)* e.g.

> "Select a short text (maximum 100 words) - advanced level. (a) Use it as the basis for the Gurrey technique - very rapid numerous questions at plain sense level requiring short phrasal answers (b) Use it as the basis for compelling pupils to interpret the sense of the text carefully (c) Use it as a basis for getting pupils to identify the discourse function/register of it."
>
> "Learners 18 year old mixed advanced
> Previous knowledge 6 years English
> Aim To help students to read with deeper literary sensitivity
> Use Duplicated 500-word passage from a Dickens novel"

In the ELT/FL microteaching programmes that I looked at, the usual procedure is that all the students in a group who teach during a particular session are concerned with the same kind of lesson segment (e.g. practising a new grammatical item, telling a story, preparing orally for a composition).** However, the microteachers normally differ in respect of the subject matter of their respective lessons (e.g. each presenting a different grammatical item, telling a different story, preparing for a different composition). In adition or alternatively, they may differ in respect of the various procedures which they use (e.g. if presenting a new grammatical item, successive students may use demonstration, explanation, elicitation, or a combination of these) or the various technique which they employ (e.g. if telling a story, blackboard drawings, flannelgraph cut-outs, models, mime etc).

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* A notable exception is the Moray House PG Diploma in Linguistics and English Language Teaching course and also the special course for Saudi Arabians, the microteaching syllabuses of which are given in Appendix E. Also included in this Appendix is the list of microteaching topics originally compiled by Dr Geoffrey Broughton at the University of London Institute of Education, as well as a list of those used on the Institute's Dip.TEFL programme in 1978.

**The kind of microteaching which is found in some FL/ELT programmes, when a team of students plans a 20-30 minute lesson consisting of several units of work which they teach in succession, is considered in 2.3.1.2.

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We have seen that one category of pre-service microteaching programme is concerned with general teaching skills. In these programmes, after some kind of introduction to the set of related behaviours that make up the skill to be practised, a student is required to prepare and teach a microlesson in which he concentrates on using the skill. Sometimes, although the skill may be specified in detail, the topic of the lesson is not. Indeed, the curriculum area may not be defined at all. For instance, in one institution when the students are about to practise 'Asking Questions', they are simply told: "An appropriate picture of an object, or a simple discussion situation will provide you with the opportunity to practise questioning." In another institution, when preparing for 'Varying the stimulus', the students are told: "You should select a topic, any topic which will enable you to practise varying the stimulus." Although this lack of specificity may well be deliberate policy with the intention that a student should not be overburdened by the need to keep in mind curriculum methodology considerations as well as those relating to the practice of the skill, there is a danger in it. As Andrews (1971) has pointed out, such microteaching in general skills which does not recognise the importance of subject-matter context may become unreal "wordmongering in limbo". On the other hand, if a student is required to teach a microlesson incorporating the general skill into his particular subject area and if he is not yet sufficiently aware of the underlying assumptions and strategies of the subject methodology, he may possibly perform well as regards his introduction and manipulation of the skill but inappropriately as regards what he chooses to teach and how he chooses to do it. Johnstone (1977) instances the case of a student practising the skill of variation in a modern language microlesson, who scored highly on the skill itself but simply taught the conjugation of the verb 'avoir' with no attempt whatever at contextualisation.

The other main category of pre-service microteaching programme that we identified concentrates on procedures and techniques within a subject area. Each microteaching topic specifies a segment of a possible FL/ELT lesson and the students practise those procedures and techniques that are considered relevant when teaching that lesson-segment in a given situation. Such an approach avoids the danger of practising general skills in limbo, but conversely it often lacks a more general framework of reference. In this subject-specific form of microteaching, because of the multiplicity of microskills relating to the procedures and techniques which a particular lesson segment involves,*

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* Since what is 'micro' in such microteaching is the number of pupils and the length of lesson, but certainly not the complexity of the skills within the lesson. Indeed, many general-skills protagonists are not in favour of subject-specific microteaching for this reason. For instance Perrott (1977) stresses that microteaching must concentrate on specific skills which she says much so-called 'microteaching' in British institutions does not where the teaching episode consists rather of a short lesson; while Stones (1976) says that "microteaching is frequently used rather pointlessly without adopting a specific skills approach" and he complains that "present approaches stressing the subject specificty of teaching skills....could well be holding back the development of other approaches that promise more fruitful outcomes in terms of overall teaching competence."

consideration of the more general teaching skills may be minimal. Although aspects of certain skills such as variation may be implicit in the briefing for a microlesson, the general concept may never be made explicit. Equally, such general skills may not attract attention in the critique session unless they are very obviously absent. For instance, only if a student talks in a *complete* monotone or *never* uses gesture or *always* remains at the front of the class may comment arise on the kinds of variation that are lacking. The danger of such a subject-specific programme is, then, that students may miss out on guidance in general skills which could help to improve their performance. One student I saw spent the whole of his 'teach' in unrelieved, unvaried high-pressure choral drill. The peer group he was teaching clearly resented not only his rather authoritarian attitude but also the lack of variety. Clearly he had not grasped the need of variety to avoid monotony and all that this entails.

It might therefore be valuable for future teachers of English if their microteaching programmes included not only specifically ELT procedures and techniques but also certain general teaching skills. This could be done in several ways. For instance, the students might be asked to practise the general skills first using subject-matter of any kind and in subsequent microteaching sessins to incorporate these skills appropriately while engaged in subject-specific teaching. This sequencing of the practice unfortunately does not solve the original danger of general skills being practised 'in limbo', although it does mean that they are eventually related to subject-teaching. Certainly in one ELT department I visited the tutor feels that he can achieve reasonable results by stressing certain elements of the general skill of 'variation' at the beginning of the course and leaving the resolution of this with ELT skills until later in the year.

It is also possible to deal with general teaching skills and those relating to particular ELT lesson-segments in combination rather than in series, and to do so by introducing them from one end or the other as an integrated unit. The microteacher may start by taking a lesson-segment (which will involve certain ELT procedures and techniques) and in the planning and execution of his microlesson incorporate deliberate instances of an appropriate general skill. This may well have been tried in Britain although I did not come across any cases of it; it has certainly been given a trial in the USA.* The microteacher may equally start from the consideration of a general skill which he hopes to practise and then choose a suitable lesson-segment into which he can incorporate this general skill. Such an approach is now in use at Stirling where preparation for the microteaching session takes the form of a briefing about a general skill which is then related in a seminar involving students, modern language tutor and a psychologist to the particular forms the skill may take in language teaching. For example, when practising reinforcement it is worth knowing that if you encourage the pupils not only by direct praise but also by repeating what they have just said, you may in the latter case be reinforcing their language learning as well as their motivation. The microteacher then proceeds to plan his lesson incorporating instances of the general skill whenever appropriate. Ulster Polytechnic is adopting a similar approach in its microteaching programme as from this year.

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* For instance Politzer (1969) describes changes in lesson focus in the FL teacher-training programme at Stanford. In 1965 the microlessons were "subject-matter oriented" (e.g. teaching of structure, pronunciation, sound-letter correspondence, reading); in 1966 they were "teacher behaviur oriented" (e.g. using a variety of stimuli, providing immediate feedback and reinforcement); while in 1967 and 1968 the focus of each microlesson was a mixture of these two (e.g. teaching pronunciation while paying particular attention to providing immediate feedback and reinforcement).

By relating general skills to their use in teaching a particular subject, other dangers may also be avoided. If a student concentrates on the use of a general skill per se and is not much concerned with the content of his microlesson or its result, he may use the skill to excess. He may, for instance, use gesture to such an extent that it becomes distracting rather than enlivening. His tendency will be to equate frequency of use with success and look no further. As Applebee (1976) has pointed out in his evaluation of Perrott's Effective Questioning course, good and poor teachers may both redirect frequently but probably only the good teacher redirects effectively. Obviously, even when a teacher does not use a skill out of all proportion, he may still concentrate too much on his performance, on how to use it, and not succeed in using it appropriately unless he is given help in relating it to his subject methodology, as with Johnstone's student and her 'avoir' paradigm. As Allen and Ryan (1969) have said: "The intention (of microteaching) is to give the beginner facility with several key skills and to give him understanding of how and when they can be most suitably applied." More recently, Griffiths (1977a) has said: "We should be concerned not just with helping students to be able to ask higher-order questions but also with helping them to develop perceptual and information processing skills that enable them to decide when to ask higher order questions." The combination of general skills practice with practice in presenting a lesson segment in a specific subject seems to offer the best chance of this.

2.1.3 The aims of programmes

A broad distinction which should perhaps be dealt with first is between those programmes where the tutor offers, or at least assumes the possible existence of, a model of 'good teaching' and those programmes where the tutor purposely does not set up a specific model.

In the first type of programme, the tutor establishes his model (even though he may admit it is only ad hoc and intuitive) and he advises the microteacher how - and why - to follow certain procedures and utilise certain specific techniques. Thus the aim of the microteaching session is, in part, for the students to become aware of the established model and to learn to measure their own performance (and that of others) against it. They are in nearly all cases encouraged to see what they are practising as a realisation of what they have studied in theory. All the general skills programmes that I looked at and the majority of the FL/ELT programmes were of this type.

The second type of programme where the tutor does not set up a specific model was, in fact, only encountered in a couple of subject-specific microteaching programmes, and these were intended for teachers with some experience. Descriptions of two such programmes are given in Brumfit (1979) who describes one of the PGCE EFL microteaching programmes at the London Institute of Education with students who have at least two years teaching experience, and in Carver and Wallace (n.d.) who mention the kind of 'exploratory' microteaching used at Moray House with trained and experienced graduate teachers on the PG Diploma in Linguistics and English Language

Teaching course. In these programmes, an area of classroom activity is selected, such as introducing a new structure or conducting remedial work. The student is given little or no special briefing, although he is aware of certain general principles of procedure which are favoured, and he tries out his own ideas keeping these principles in mind. Subsequently, careful consideration is given to the pedagogic problems raised and to possible alternative strategies. As Brumfit says, he is using microteaching not as a way of 'correcting' or 'improving' specific skills ("although it is possible that such results may come as spin-off") but "as a source for discussion and analysis with the general aim of sensitising students to the process of integrating practical decisions with systematic and principled thinking about both specific teaching demands and general educational theory." Behind such an approach to microteaching is a belief that good teaching cannot be defined; it is relative and exists only in relation to a particular situation and it is therefore impossible to set up a model 'in limbo'. There is also the belief that it is preferable to start from a view of where the student is rather than from where he ought to be. In this way it is possible to build on what a student can already do and not stop him from being himself.

This very non-prescriptive and flexible approach is clearly tenable in the context of the courses mentioned at the London Institute and Moray House (and especially since the future teaching situations to which the teachers on these courses will be going are extremely heterogeneous). It is doubtful, however, how far such an approach would be appropriate either with completely inexperienced students (especially those of a fairly low average ability and/or education)* or in a training situation where the needs of the future teachers are known with a fair degree of precision. In these situations it might well be preferable to set up some kind of model for the trainees to focus on. It is not inconceivable that an 'exploratory' pre-service microteaching programme could be conducted effectively in certain circumstances, but since the pre-service courses which I visited did in fact set up models (albeit ones which were to a greater or lesser degree defined), it is with this type of programme that I shall be mainly concerned in this section.

It would appear that certain assumptions about microteaching are fairly common. Most people agree that it is a means of scaling down the size, complexity and personal impact of classroom teaching so that the student-teacher can concentrate more easily on certain procedures and techniques. (As we have seen, however, this may mean to different people breaking down general teaching abilities into specific skills or whole lessons into particular segments.) Such scaling down and focussing on particular aspects, it is assumed, will lead to clearer understanding and to greater confidence when dealing with the whole. Most people also agree that microteaching can provide a bridge between theory and practice, but their conception of what this means and how it can best be achieved may also differ widely.

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* Indeed, even in respect of the Moray House PG Diploma course, it was suggested to me that at times a student might in the absence of sufficient specific briefing teach in a way which was for a variety of reasons so unacceptable that it was extremely difficult in the subsequent critique to sort matters out.

Certainly none of the tutors using microteaching to whom I talked would seem to identify at all closely with the original Stanford aims based on a behaviourist rationale. This is true for those lecturers who are concerned in their microteaching programmes with focussing on general teaching skills (as did the Stanford programme) as well as for those who are concerned with lesson segments. The original programme was construed in terms of a practice reinforcement model derived from behaviour modification theory (i.e. the student attempts to approximate to the teaching behaviour of a model and a supervisor provides positive feedback to reinforce the desired behaviour while unreinforced undesirable behaviour gradually becomes extinct). Its success was measurable in terms of observable changes in behaviour in respect of skill performance over a complete session which consisted - twice over for each skill - of 'modelling - planning - teach - critique - replanning - reteach - recritique'. Indeed, if there was no change at the end of the two sessions for a skill, the sessions would of necessity be considered unsuccessful. In my experience over the past year only in a very few cases did anything near this approach appear to be in use e.g. at one institution the tutor arranges microteaching sessions for practising gesture, facial expression and aspects of physical posture when a student has to reteach again and again until he exhibits the desired behaviour (and even here the tutor said his aim was not to get his students to approximate precisely to a given model of behaviour as he disapproved of stereotyping). Although a certain number of the tutors I talked to thought that microteaching did lead to some fairly immediate changes in behaviour, some pointed out that this was not always the case with all students and/or for all skills (and that even when there was observable behaviour change in a reteach, it was not clear whether the teaching skills apparently acquired during microteaching would carry over into real classroom situations).

Moreover, some tutors said that a microteaching session often might produce no significant observable change in student behaviour (except perhaps in relatively minor 'points to remember' e.g. not obscuring the blackboard when writing on it). Indeed, sometimes when reteaches occurred, students might even perform less effectively than on their previous teaches - which had led in some cases to the reteach being dropped and even to a couple of microteaching programmes being abandoned altogether. Nevertheless, in spite of some uncertainty as to observable results, a good many microteaching programmes of one kind or another are being continued. Since, clearly, no great reliance is now being placed on microteaching producing immediate behaviour modification a new justification for it is to be expected. In fact, many people concerned with microteaching in a wide variety of forms - from those using something like the original Stanford format to those using something much reduced and altered, and from those dealing with general skills to those dealing with lesson segments - agreed that, whether signs of actual change were manifest or not, the success of their microteaching sessions was not to be judged by this.

A change of aim and objectives in the case of some tutors using microteaching seems, therefore, to have come about partly because of the limited success they felt was achieved in immediate modification of teacher behaviour. And this lack of success may in turn have been seen as inherent in the procedure or merely as a result of circumstance (limited time, large numbers of students, etc). In either case, rethinking and restructuring of microteaching programmes has resulted. In addition, certain tutors have departed from the Stanford pattern and aim not so much for pragmatic and/or experiential considerations but because of theories they hold which are in opposition to the behaviourist rationale. Those who hold, for instance, the Gestalt view which considers a change in perception is a prerequisite of a change in behaviour will obviously not approve the premises behind the Stanfordian format.

For various reasons, therefore, a very wide range of tutors now say that the aim of their microteaching programmes - though still to develop proficiency in particular skills (either general or related to lesson segments) - is not to do so by direct behaviour modification but rather by 'sensitising' the students. For instance, McAleese (1976) says he was surprised that in an experiment he conducted, microteaching did not produce any noticeable effect, but he consoles himself with the thought that "microteaching can be and is effective in sensitising students in skill awareness." Overall, the most prevalent attitude found towards the aim and value of microteaching would seem to be summed up by White (1975):

> "Teaching is too complex an activity and the time available is too short for each student to develop the necessary skills thorough practice and analysis of feedback on performance. The best one can hope for is to help student teachers develop a conceptual understanding of the nature of the skills being studied, leaving the development of individual skill to subequent classroom experience. Adopting this approach makes possible the design of a much more economic programme of microteaching."

Johnstone (1977) has come to much the same conclusion. He says that after four years of using microteaching with modern language students at Stirling, he feels that:

> "Microteaching is more useful in providing a meaningful context in which aspects of modern language teaching may be analysed and discussed than in developing a particularly high level of performance in any pedagogical skills. Really to develp a skill - say, variation - would demand a great deal of practice both out of and in school - far more than we can possibly provide."

Approximation to a model is, therefore, not seen as an immediate or primary objective; awareness is. However, the expressions used by various tutors I talked to ('sensitising students in skill awareness', 'familiarising them with certain procedures and techniques', etc) are in general vague enough to allow of various interpretations, and in talking to the individual tutors this indeed became apparent. There was a certain common ground, obviously in that they were all now apparently concerned to a greater or lesser degree with the students' thought processes, and the priority was to influence their ideas and perceptions. But in practice, what they aimed at making the students aware of varied in its range, as it did in the degree of specificity and/or prescriptiveness with which it was presented. The tutors concerned clearly varied in their interpretation not only from each other but even from themselves on different occasions.

They might, for instance, take 'making the students aware of a skill or the behaviour appropriate to a lesson segment' simply to mean alerting them to its nature and components. They might also include - to a greater or less degree - making the student-teachers relate the skill or behaviour to theories of learning and/or to language teaching approaches and methodology, thereby helping them to see reasons for it whilst the theories and approaches themselves are clarified by the exemplification which the skill or behaviour provides. In addition, tutors might include some measure of sensitising students to appropriate occasions for the use of the skill or behaviour involved. There was a feeling with some tutors that without an awareness of why a particular skill or behaviour should be adopted and an acceptance of it into one's way of thinking (which may mean changing existing concepts), it was not likely to survive long in the classroom. There was also a feeling that if no consideration was given as to when to use a skill or behaviour, or with whom, it might be used inappropriately. Differences in what tutors feel they are sensitising their students to are matched by the way they organise the components of their microteaching programmes. The theoretical underpinning is sometimes stressed far more especially in the introductory part of a session - than in others, and likewise appropriate use may be given far more consideration - particularly in some critique sessions - than in others. Sometimes, differences in emphasis even lead to one or other of the basic components - the briefing, teach, critique, and reteach - being omitted altogether.

Overall, then, the only clear general tendency that seems to emerge from a consideration of tutors' aims is that they are - though in varying degrees and ways - moving towards a cognitive perspective of microteaching.* This tendency has recently been noted by MacLeod and McIntyre (1977, reprinted in McIntyre et al 1977), who have stated that few people would now justify microteaching according to the original Stanford behaviourist rationale and still fewer programmes would in fact conform to the kinds of principles of practice which behaviour modification theory would imply. They - and also Griffiths (1977a) - suggest that behavioural change implies previous cogniti change, and that the purpose of microteaching is to help student-teachers develop a conceptual understanding of the skills being studied. MacLeod and McIntyre postulate:

> "1. Before starting microteaching programmes, each student has distinctive complex conceptual schemata relating to teaching, these schemata having strong evaluative associations.s
>
> 2. Individual differences in these conceptual schemata are large, but large areas of commonality may also obtain through the embedding of the schemata within (inter alia) a network of schemata representing specific subject ideologies.
>
> 3. These conceptual schemata show a high degree of stability, but can change gradually through the assimilation of new constructs and principles, acquired through instruction and experience.
>
> 4. Students' conceptual schemata to a large extent control their teaching behaviour, and changes in behaviour result from changes in schemata."

And they go on to say that "It seems likely that short-term behavioural changes - the conventional criteria - are likely to be matched by similar and enduring changes in classroom teaching behaviour only if they reflect changes in cognitive structures."

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* 'In varying degrees and ways' in that some tutors feel that microteaching may be partly habit forming and partly cognition forming, depending on the particular behaviours involved. Professor Jack Duthie, who told me that he was of this opinion, gave the skill of variation as an instance.

2.2 Particular components of British microteaching programmes

Having looked at the general features of a number of microteaching programmes in Britain - their organisation, content and aims - we will now consider in more detail their procedural components and how these relate to the general features already mentioned.

There appears to be no overall agreement as to what procedural components are necessary nor as to what the internal structuring of the components should be. In the original Stanford programme with its behaviour modification perspective, the standard sequence of components according to Allen and Ryan (1969) was: watching a video-taped model a day or so before the microteaching session, planning the lesson, teaching it (15 minutes), critique (10 minutes), replanning (15 minutes), reteach (5 minutes) and recritique (10 minutes). If one adopts a cognitive perspective, however, it may not appear essential to include all these components in a microteaching programme. Indeed, if change in behaviour is seen not as the direct result of actually practising the skill but of a previous change in the student's perception and understanding of the skill, some people would say it is not necessary to have a structured microteaching programme at all but simply 'discrimination training'. Research quoted by Griffiths (1976b reprinted Trott 1977) and also by Hargie and Maidment (1978) tends, in fact, to indicate that any changes in behaviour produced by microteaching programmes may derive from the discrimination training element in them.* (Some say the critique session also contributes to the discrimination training and hence to eventual change.) This has led Hargie and Maidment to postulate that "perhaps the practical element of microteaching could be eliminated, with greater emphasis being placed on the ability of trainees to discriminate the relevant behaviours being trained."

In fact, since the 1978/79 session, Hargie has started to implement a programme embodying a version of this approach at Ulster Polytechnic in an attempt to determine its effectiveness. Previously the microteaching programme for B.Ed students there consisted of fifteen weekly sessions during which every student taught, using a particular skill or combination of skills, each week. There was no perceptual modelling beforehand, only a lecture and a discussion (although each student's teach was video-recorded and subsequently discussed). Now, just the last four sessions include actual teaching and during these each student only teaches three times, while the first eleven sessions consist of discrimination training on particular skills. These eleven sessions each begin with two hours during which students and a tutor from the Simulated Social Skills Training Unit watch and discuss videotapes specially made by the Unit, depicting various uses of a skill. Immediately following this the students have another two-hour session with their methods tutors when they discuss the application of the skill in their particular subjects.

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* Griffiths even goes so far as to assert that "...available evidence predominantly favours the conclusion that a modelling package can be effective in changing teacher behaviour without a supplementary structured programme of microteaching."

In all the other microteaching programmes that I looked at, each skill or lesson segment that is included has its own definite teach and critique. However, partly because tutors have a different perspective on microteaching from the original Stanford one and also for reasons which we will consider later, most of these programmes do not include any specific modelling nor a reteach or a recritique. Moreover, the procedures adopted within the teach and critique differ significantly from those at Stanford, to a large extent because all the British programmes looked at are conducted 'communally' whereas the Stanford programme operated on an 'individual student' basis.* By 'communally' is meant that the students in a microteaching group (which may be the whole or part of a 'class') participate in a joint programme in which they all witness the lessons given by other members of the group and participate in the critique sessions. In most programmes a group consists of between 5-10 students, although some have as few as two or three and others 15 or more.** Several reasons were given by tutors why they prefer a 'communal' approach to microteaching. These included: (a) the fact that the students who observe provide valuable feedback for the microteacher in addition to that provided by the tutor (b) the observers themselves benefit by develping their own powers of critical awareness as they watch each microlesson, and also by participating in critique sessions where many of the points discussed may be equally relevant to their own teaching but might not actually be covered in the critique of their particular microlesson (or if they do come up, they only need to be referred to briefly because they have already been fully discussed in connection with another student).

Of course some students may not care for their teaching to be exposed to 'public' scrutiny and comment in this way. At the New University of Ulster, for instance, I was told that a few tutors prefer to hold critique sessions with each of their students on his/her own (although the 'teach' itself is a 'communal' event with each of the four students in a group required by departmental regulations to attend and watch the other members teach). However, many tutors seem to feel that, with recent trends towards more open classrooms and team teaching, future teachers should be able to accept and use the constructive criticism of their peers, and that it is therefore valuable to have experience of this on their training course. Moreover, there is the possibility of a tutor being over-considerate of students' feelings: at Hull, for instance, a modern language tutor told me that, although she originally conducted microteaching on an individual basis and even allowed each student a private 'cosmetic' viewing of his/her video-recording before he/she saw it with her - she no longer believes that such measures are necessary and now conducts her microteaching programme 'communally'. The procedural components which we shall look at in turn will be the briefing (2.2.1), the teach (2.2.2), the critique (2.2.3), and the reteach and recritique (2.2.4). In doing so, it must be remembered that the effectiveness or otherwise of the way a particular component is organised cannot be judged in isolation but only according to how it contributes to a given microteaching programme.

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* An exception is Perrott's Effective Questioning course which is intended for individual use by practising teachers.

** The number of students in a group seems to depend as much on pragmatic reasons as on the tutor's preference. As Broughton (1979) says of the microteaching programme at the University of London Institute of Education: "The number of tutors, rooms and videotape sets available dictates the number of groups into which we can divide course members." As a result the number of students in a group may vary between 8-15, "ten being regarded as comfortable."

2.2.1 The briefing component

I have used the word 'briefing' when considering this component of microteaching rather than 'modelling' (the term used in the original Stanford programme and which for many people still implies, as it did then, exemplification of an ideal) because 'briefing' may cover not only this and other approaches to exemplification but also additional or alternative forms of preparation. For instance, when Griffiths (1977a) talks of 'modelling', although he has retained the basic idea of exemplification, he has moved away from the Stanford concept of its purpose: "Instead of regarding the role of skill models as records of teaching behaviour to be copied and imitated, modelling can be seen in a cognitive perspective as a means of providing exemplification of the constructs included in the skill of definition." I use 'briefing', then, to cover such an approach and all the others that I have encountered. In this section I shall consider firstly the nature of briefing sessions in current British microteaching programmes (2.2.1.1) and subsequently matters relating to the briefing session in overseas ELT microteaching programmes (2.2.1.2).

2.2.1.1 Nature of briefing sessions in current programmes

In 2.1.3 we mentioned the type of 'exploratory' microteaching programme which is intended as a source for discussion and analysis rather than for developing specific skills. In this, the tutor does not therefore set up a definite model but instead the student tries out his own ideas keeping certain principles of procedure in mind. In effect, the immediate briefing may consist of no more than the tutor giving a few suggestions on general approach and method. This offers a marked contrast with the type of microteaching programme in which the tutor provides his students with a very precise and specific model of the behaviour to which they are required to approximate. In this case the student has a good deal of briefing which takes the form of prescription and possibly also proscription. In the subsequent teach the student has to try to adhere as closely as he can to the instructions he has been given while in the critique there is likely to be a close examination of how far he has succeeded in doing so.

One can, in fact, plot microteaching programmes along a continuum stretching between these two extremes by assessing how far they approach to one end or the other. As mentioned in 2.1.3 the pre-service programmes which I looked at tended towards the side of the 'prescriptive model'. Nevertheless they are, as it were, spaced out and have significant differences between them. These differences result from the way in which each individual tutor perceives the needs and abilities of his own students and also from his own outlook and beliefs as regards teaching and learning.* The kind of briefing session that results reflects these differences.

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* Of course, a tutor may feel that, even though his students need to acquire a feeling for appropriateness and an individual teaching style, they nevertheless need to start with some definite guidance in certain procedures and techniques which can form the basis for subsequent development; it could be confusing for novices to leave them with too little guidance.

In the programmes I looked at, the briefing sessions mainly consisted of *'definition' and in some cases 'exemplification'*. The 'definition' might comprise any or all of the following: the students hearing a talk, or reading about, or discussing with the tutor, the type of skill or lesson segment being dealt with. The 'exemplification' might consist of a live or videotaped demonstration, an audiotaped demonstration, and/or the students reading the script of a lesson intended to illustrate the kind of behaviour proposed. (I saw hardly any instances of negative modelling.) The most comprehensive kinds of briefing session I encountered were those dealing with general teaching skills in microteaching programmes organised on an interdisciplinary basis, as at the institutions which I list in the next paragraph.*

At the New University of Ulster, before each microteaching session the students attend a lecture on the skill to be practised and are also given duplicated handouts and a list of recommended reading. In addition, some tutors also have a session with their students beforehand. (The reason they do not have exemplification as well is - according to the tutor in charge of microteaching there - not because of disapproval of exemplification but because of lack of time to make reasonable tapes.)

Dundee and Stirling both prepare their students for each skill by means of the self-instructional package. At Dundee this consists of a handout for the student covering the main points about the skill and also a video-recording for him to watch which illustrates the skill in a microteaching context. He is, in addition, provided with a transcript of the video-recorded lesson for reference later when planning his own lesson. At Stirling, the package involves a student in studying a handout which describes the psychological basis of the skill, in watching one or more video-recordings illustrating the skill in a microteaching setting and sometimes also in studying lesson transcripts, and in coding - with the help of specially-devised coding schedules - instances of the skills which occur in the recordings and/or transcripts.** The briefing at Stirling also includes a subject seminar conducted jointly by a psychologist and the students' subject-tutor, in which the skill is discussed with reference to that subject. At Ulster Polytechnic prior to the 1978/79 session, the students had only a lecture and a discussion as briefing for each skill. Now, however, the students in groups watch and discuss with the Simulated Social Skills Training Unit tutor video-recordings which illustrate each skill and which include instances from real classroom teaching; subsequently, they have a seminar with their own subject-tutor when the skill is discussed in terms of that subject. When microteaching was practised at Coventry College of Education (where the programme dealt with questioning skills), the self-instructional exemplification consisted of audio-recordings and lesson-transcripts and the students were required to identify instances of the various sub-skills.

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* In addition, an example of very comprehensive modelling is found in Perrott's Effective Questioning course. After studying the account of each set of three related skills (which also contains model lesson transcripts), the teacher sees three videorecordings: the first presents each skill in turn with oral and subtitle cueing; the second shows the jumbled use of the skills in a microlesson and the viewer has to identify instances of each one when they occur by marking a sheet appropriately; while the third is a repeat of the second with correct answers given for checking. Only in respect of the fourth and final set of skills - which is concerned with eliminating habits that interrupt classroom discussion - is there a certain amount of negative modelling.

** See Appendix F for specimens of the various coding schedules used at Stirling.

In the FL/ELT microteaching programmes that I look at, the immediate briefing does not usually appear to be as comprehensive as in the general skills programmes. In some cases, this may be because a tutor does not wish to be over-prescriptive or too specific in the way he sets out what is to be practised. In other cases a tutor may consider that the previous part of the methodology course has provided a sufficiently thorough introduction without much additional briefing being necessary immediately prior to the microteaching session. I did not see any specially prepared briefing packages such as those described above.* In the majority of microteaching programmes the briefing consisted of definition only and indeed a number of the tutors I talked to were very wary of any exemplification. They seemed far more worried than the tutors on the general skills programmes that the students might be led to imitate undiscriminatingly whatever was demonstrated.

The form that this definition takes varies considerably. A tutor may hold a tutorial for the whole class or group in order to discuss and clarify the procedures and techniques appropriate to the particular lesson segment. The tenor of the discussion will vary in its degree of prescriptiveness and specificity according to the approach adopted by the tutor. The students may also be given duplicated handouts prepared by the tutor to read and may be referred to sections in books on methodology. In addition to - or in some cases instead of - this kind of briefing, some tutors arrange individual tutorials with the microteachers before they plan their microlesson, and/or check the lesson-plan once it has been prepared. One tutor even goes as far as getting his students to rehearse their microlessons beforehand to him. Some tutors, on the other hand, simply make themselves available for consultation in case a student should wish to discuss his lesson.

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* Nor do any seem to exist in Britain (for use with FL/ELT programmes) of the comprehensive kind found in certain institutions in the USA. Delorenzo (1973), for instance, describes a Spanish methods microteaching course at an American university where, before teaching, each student reads specially-prepared descriptive material and views four videotapes showing demonstrations in turn by the course instructor, a methods student in a peer-teaching situation, a methods student in a microteaching situation in a local school, and a teacher in a school teaching his/her own pupils. Mackey (1968) also describes his use at a Canadian university of video-recordings of parts of language lessons (which purportedly illustrate the 'best' possible teaching) when his students - guided by verbal and visual cueing - identify and analyse the various stages of the part of the lesson presented.

In those comparatively few cases where exemplification forms part of the briefing in FL/ELT microteaching programmes, the students usually watch and discuss a relevant lesson or lessons on film or videotape, or one given live by the tutor himself. Even in these cases, the majority of tutors appear to stress that such examples should not be regarded as definitive models. As Broughton (1979) says of the collection of video-recordings of previous students' microlessons which are shown to subsequent groups at the University of London Institute of Education: "This can be a stimulating start to microteaching, but it has the potential danger of encouraging modelling. We have no departmental 'line' to be followed, but accept that there are several kinds of excellence. Any recordings of previous microteaching sessions are shown explicitly as examples of how others have responded to the challenge." Indeed, at the London Institute some tutors have come to prefer the system of simply telling their students that such videotapes are available for them to view in their own time if they wish to, rather than the tutor showing them specially during class time.

In addition to, or instead of, exemplification as part of the actual microteaching programme, a few tutors provide something of this nature earlier in the methodology course. For instance, some tutors give a few demonstration lessons (quite often in a language not known to their students who are used as pupils), and they may arrange for films to be seen or video-recordings of local practising teachers to be available. At Hull, for instance, FL students have access to self-instructional packages which contain recordings of modern-language teachers giving real lessons. These illustrate not only successful teaching but also teaching where problems have arisen, and students are provided with a list of questions to guide their observation e.g. "After explaining and reinforcing 'courte', the teacher makes a tactical error - what does she do wrong?" Specimen worksheets from these packages are included in Appendix B.*

Note on other types of exemplification

It is possible to have exemplification which does not simply provide one kind of model for imitation (whether or not there are several instances of it) but instead presents for consideration a number of different ways of dealing with a lesson segment (i.e. the use of different procedures and techniques) each of which is equally valid in particular circumstances. Dugas (1967) obviously approves of presenting such alternatives when he suggests that, since there is no one method in language-teaching but rather a variety of approaches depending on the learning styles of particular pupils, it is not a good idea to have one teacher demonstrating but rather to have films and videotapes of a large number of different but outstanding teachers as they teach the same content "including - and perhaps especially - those who are not teaching according to common accepted practices." If such material were readily available, students could then in groups view the tapes and discuss the feasibility of the various approaches in different situations.

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* More of this kind of activity is probably provided in the USA. Jorstad (1971) for instance, describes a collection of videotapes of real FL lessons given by regular teachers. These are arranged so that students may follow on tape a succession of full lessons or see on a single tape work on successive days in particular parts of lessons such as reading, writing, teaching a dialogue etc. Paulton (1974) also describes a collection of EFL videotapes at the University of Pittsburgh which provide examples of 'good' teaching. In Britain an interesting innovation is the Mobile Video Recording Section of the ILEA Learning Material Section which can be commissioned by tutors and inspectors to provide recordings of specified classroom situations (Gifford, 1976).

Not surprisingly, because there are obvious difficulties in assembling such material, very little of this kind of exemplification appears to be in use. It is possible that individual tutors are working towards this approach a far as they can. Wragg (1974), for instance, describes how he used six different video-recorded models, all enacted by himself, to show different ways of starting a lesson. Similarly - although not in a microteaching context - Gibb (1970) describes how, at the University of Leeds Centre for TV Research, he made two recordings of different teachers presenting the same poem to their classes of 10-11 year olds in primary schools, where the teachers' methods are completely different but both equally valid. In the same article, he mentions how he made recordings of three teachers teaching the same unit of a German audio-visual course to pupils of the same age and approximate level of German but in different kinds of class (one was a mixed secondary-modern class while the other two were grammar-school classes, one all boys and the other all girls).

2.2.1.2 Consideration of factors affecting the briefing session

When setting up an ELT microteaching programme, it is obvious from the description of British courses in 2.2.1.1 that it will be necessary first to decide whether a special briefing component should be included or not. If a tutor considers his students are sufficiently prepared for the teaching session from the previous part of the course (or for some other reason) he may decide against its inclusion. If, on the other hand, briefing is to be included, it will then be necessary to consider whether exemplification should, if possible, be provided as well as definition.

Naturally, it is only possible to decide these questions in relation to a given set of circumstances. As we have seen, some FL/ELT tutors do not feel any need for special briefing sessions in their microteaching programmes; while those who do have such sessions but who do not wish to be too prescriptive or over-specific do not include exemplification since they are wary of presenting any model which may encourage direct imitation.* However, this attitude is less likely to be taken in a large number of overseas pre-service ELT teacher-training institutions where, if exemplification as well as definition can be provided, tutors will probably choose to use both. In situations where the trainees have not reached a particularly high level in general education or language ability and they are complete teaching novices (or previously untrained teachers with no real professional skills), the discussion approach is not likely to be appropriate. A fairly prescriptive and specific approach giving as much direction as possible is likely to be considered initially more effective.*

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* Although, as Griffiths (1977a) points out, there are other ways of looking at 'modelling' in a cognitive perspective i.e. the observers are not simply quiescent cameras or tape-recorders that store isomorphic representations of the modelled events but rather active agents who transform, classify and organise what they see.

How the particular students determine the form of the programme including the nature of the briefing is clearly seen at Moray House where the EFL microteaching programme for in-service teachers on the Postgraduate Diploma in Linguistics and English Language Teaching course tends to the exploratory while a much more precriptive approach is adopted with a special group of non-graduate mostly pre-service Saudi Arabian students (see Cousins et al (1978)). As Carver and Wallace (n.d.) also point out, pre-service students - unlike in-service ones - are often unable to relate the information and discussion concerning the skill which arises during a briefing session to a real teaching situation, and in such cases demonstration microteaching may be valuable. Similarly, while A J Trott told me that he deliberately does not include any form of 'modelling' with his 4th-year B.Ed students at Bulmershe, he said that from earlier experience he recognises that one may need to be much more prescriptive with first-year students. He also speculated in the light of his recent experience of organising microteaching courses in India and Thailand that it might be preferable to set up a 'two-tier' system of microteaching in situations of the kind he had encountered.

When it has been decided, in the context of a particular microteaching programme, to have a briefing session which includes exemplification, it will then be necessary to decide upon the mode of this exemplification. There are four possibilities: video-recordings (or film), audio-recordings, lesson transcripts, or live demonstration; and which to use will again depend on particular circumstances.

In cases where the visual element is highly desirable, the choice has to be between video-recorded (or filmed) material and live demonstration (as for instance, with story telling when gesture and facial expression are important, or procedures in early reading work where pupils are in groups using flashcards etc). Where there are facilities for the use of video-recorded (or filmed) material, this has certain advantages over live demonstration:

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* For instance, Bradford (1967), while acknowledging the need for fostering initiative in teachers, says that in some situations "teachers have such a poor professional and subject background that only a firm approach of a somewhat dogmatic nature seems to achieve real results". Similarly Bright (1968) referring to his teacher-training work in the Sudan writes: "Visitors criticised our rigidity and pointed out that we were stifling the teachers' originality. We accepted this as a point of view, but we knew it was wrong. We saw the teachers blossom as they mastered the art of driving down the tramlines. We went to schools where the cry had always been 'Come and show us what to do' and students from our courses came rushing out saying 'Come and see what my class can do.' We were not stifling their originality but relieving them of the impossible burden of having to think out every move for themselves and leaving them free to exercise originality, secure in the knowledge that, if a new idea flopped, they could safely retreat to the old and tried routine. We had the evidence of our eyes that the way to get originality was to start by creating a tradition."

1) we can be sure that it contains what we want the students to see (in contrast to a live performance which is unpredictable and during which the trainee may have to watch a lot of mediocre teaching along with the good without it being possible to tell him which is which) 2) we can stop the film for discussion whenever we wish (3) any number of viewings are possible 4) the lesson is less likely to have been distorted by the presence of the camera than it would by observers (this is, of course, also true if a live lesson is watched on CCTV). If, however, video-recorded (or filmed) material is not available (as in many overseas situations), the tutor will have to decide whether to use live demonstration or simply manage with definition. As we have seen, a live performance has disadvantages but it also has advantages over definition alone. A reasonably competent performance may well help students - who usually prefer to see and not just hear about teaching - and if a lesson has less successful parts these may serve as a basis for subsequent discussion. Moreover, if the tutor himself gives the lessons (preferably with pupils whom he teaches regularly), this should foster good tutor/student relations. In fact, the traditional 'demonstration' lesson by the tutor still survives in many places overseas as a valid concept although perhaps more honoured in the breach than the observance in certain cases. In Britain, on the other hand, many tutors justify their not giving demonstration lessons by arguing that to do so might encourage the idea that there is a sin gle 'right' way to teach.* Some people would say it is worth risking this danger. As Kaye (1970) points out, "it has been my own experience that students are very much more ready to listen to advice after having seen the lecturer deal with problems himself; while to invite and be prepared to discuss criticism of his own lessons is to establish the kind of 'rapport' that enables him to make effective criticism in turn."

In cases when the visual element is not so necessary (as, for instance, in lesson segments concerned with practising a dialogue or studying a reading passage), audio-recordings and lesson transcripts offer possible alternatives to perceptual forms of exemplification. Perrott (1977) suggests it is valuable to use audio models when dealing with verbal skills if perceptual models are not available. According to Perrott (personal communcation), recent trials in India with a version of her Effective Questioning course which uses audio models have been very successful. In the period when Coventry College of Education had a microteaching programme in questioning skills, they also used audio-modelling with apparent success. It is, however, worth remembering that some overseas students with inadequate English may find decontextualised sound confusing. The other alternative - lesson transcripts - has not been used a great deal in Britain, but a review of the research into the relative effectiveness of this kind of modelling for verbal skills as against perceptual modelling has been made by Griffiths (1976b). Admittedly all the research he reports is American and concerned with general rather than subject-specific verbal skills, being mostly on aspects of questioning behaviour. However, Griffiths makes the tentative generalisation that "written transcript models of verbal behaviour can be as effective as perceptual models" and he concludes that "There is little support for the extra cost of perceptual modelling." He does, however, point out that perceptual modelling has greater motivational value.

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* In this connection it is interesting that at the 1978 IATEFL conference, an ELT expert with many years experience overseas said bluntly that the real reason why the tutors on his daughter's teacher-training course in Britain do not give any demonstration lessons is that they are incapable of doing so!

It would therefore seem that if video equipment is available or can be obtained, it will usually be worth making use of it. If it is not, audiotapes and/or lesson transcripts may be as - or very nearly as - effective in the case of activities where the visual element is not so important. However, in many institutions in the poorer developing countries, neither audiorecordings nor lesson transcripts will be possible for financial reasons. In such cases, live demonstration may be the only possibility (and will of course involve the same choices, decisions and disadvantages as have already been mentioned).

Note on negative modelling

When one is video-recording material for use in briefing sessions, the question arises whether or not to include instances of negative modelling. Griffiths (1976b) suggests that "positive models seem generally most effective but negative and mixed models can be effective given additional guidance." Cammish (1973) says about her own video-recordings of modern-language teachers in action: "It is untrue that student-teachers can learn only from watching good teaching: they may be impressed by it but they can often learn far more from watching unsuccessful teaching and then discussing why it was unsuccessful." However, if we do present negative modelling, we must make clear to the students that it is negative. In this connection, it is worth considering the accounts given by Gibb (1968) and Cammish (1973) of dubbing commentaries onto video-recordings of FL lessons. Both of them found that the auditory information was not as effective as had been expected, possibly because visual information is, in general, so much more compelling. If they are right in their observations, it is clearly necessary to be very careful when presenting negative modelling even if it has a dubbed commentary to point out the defects.

2.2.2 The teach component

In considering the teach component of current British microteaching programmes, I shall look in turn at matters concerned with the teacher (2.2.2.1), those concerned with the pupils (2.2.2.2), and finally those concerned with the tutor and the microteacher's peers (2.2.2.3).

2.2.2.1 Teacher considerations

A major difference between microteaching programmes is apparent in the nature of the teach session. In most of the microteaching programmes that I looked at (and certainly in all those concerned with general skills), the usual procedure is that all the members of a group practise teaching each skill or lesson segment. The tutors involved feel that in this way each student receives feedback on his/her personal performance, as well as developing confidence and benefiting from having to prepare the microlessons.

In the case of other programmes, however, the usual procedure is that not all members of a group teach each skill or lesson segment. The number of those who do so varies from one programme to another - in a couple of cases only one student teaches while in others more than one - but by no means all - teach. For convenience I shall call such an arrangement 'vicarious' microteaching (to distinguish it from the other arrangement which I shall call 'participatory' microteaching). The justification given for it was that it is not necessary for each student to teach each skill for them all to profit from microteaching i.e if in microteaching we are concerned with developing students' perception and understanding of a skill as a prerequisite of any change in behaviour (rather than with securing an immediate change), a student can do this from an analysis of someone else's teach just as well as from his own. Some tutors therefore feel that even if there is time available for everyone to practise each skill, it might be used more profitably in other ways. Other tutors who would prefer all their students to teach each skill but do not have time for this, nevertheless feel for various reasons that it is still worth having at least 'vicarious' microteaching.

We might of course ask the first group of tutors why they do not go a step further and simply have observation of video-recordings of teachers in action. However, even those tutors who use vicarious microteaching from choice seem to consider an actual teach by (at least) one of their students preferable to a video-recording of an unknown teacher. They say that the teach is an 'experienced' event so that in subsequent discussin the actual teacher is present to give his impressions while the observers also tend to be more lively and sharp in perception than when analysing videotapes at - as it were - second handd. Live practice also has greater face validity which is especially important on pre-service courses.*

There are no conclusive research findings about the respective value of participatory and vicarious microteaching. However, as we mentioned earlier, research quoted by Griffiths (1976b) and Hargie and Maidment (1978) tends to indicate that discrimination training may be all that is needed. Also, recent research at Stirling described by McIntyre (1977b) found that in the case of students working in pairs during microteaching practice, there was hardly any difference in subsequent teaching behaviour between the student who actually did the teaching and his fellow student who did not. On the other hand, research by Leith and Britton (1977) tends to the contrary viewpoint.**

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* It is worth noting that all the cases of vicarious microteaching which I encountered involved peer teaching. I wonder, therefore, whether the feeling of emotional involvement would be as great if students were simply observers watching a fellow student teach a class of pupils - or if not as great, would it nevertheless still be more than if watching a film or a video-recording of someone else's teaching?

** In the experiment conducted by Leith and Britton, there were two groups who both had detailed discussion of teaching objectives and examination of specific skills, but members of the first group only participated in teach sessions as pupils while the members of the second group not only did so but also did some actual teaching and reteaching. The subsequent rating during a period of teaching practice showed that, in respect of abilities concerned with intellectual aspects of teaching (i.e. planning and preparation of lessons), there was no significant difference between the groups (and both were well above a control group which had undergone the traditional less rigorous and less task-related preparation for teaching practice). However, in respect of abilities concerned with performance aspects of teaching (i.e. attracting and maintaining attention, giving guidance, prompting and reinforcement, and bringing about pupil participation), the second group was considerably superior to the first (which was in fact just about the same as the control group). However, it does seem from Leith and Britton's account that the group which did not teach did not participate in any critique sessions either, whereas students who taught also analysed with their supervisor video-recordings of their performances, and it might be this component (rather than the teach itself) which produced the difference.

Even if vicarious microteaching should prove to be less effective than participatory microteaching (and certainly as mentioned, the majority of tutors have participatory microteaching because they believe this preferable), it would still seem to have a lot to offer. It is likely to be of especial relevance in institutions with a high student:tutor ratio (as in the case of many in developing countries). Very often microteaching is not considered feasible in such situations since it is impossible to arrange for every student to teach and receive feedback for each skill in the time a tutor has available; therefore no microteaching of any kind is attempted. However, some form of vicarious microteaching might be possible and preferable to no microteaching at all. Also, it is worth considering whether, in situations where the student:tutor ratio permits participatory microteaching but some tutors are not qualified for and/or interested in undertaking microteaching supervision (as at the New University of Ulster), it might be preferable to have vicarious microteaching which could be conducted by a smaller number of satisfactory supervisors, rather than participatory microteaching conducted by supervisors many of whom are forced into it).

In situations where there is a sufficiently small student:tutor ratio for it to be possible for every student to teach and have a critique, then the decision is really one between all the students teaching but having less time for subsequent discussion, and not all the students teaching and having proportionately more time for discussion of each one. Individual tutors or those in charge of microteaching programmes will - and do - obviusly differ in their feelings, and in our present state of knowledge about microteaching, it is hardly possible to say which is likely to be preferable.

When it is either not possible for all to teach or the tutor does not wish all to teach, it is still necessary to decide how many students will teach (assuming that, in the case of time limitation, it is nevertheless possible for more than one to do so adequately). It may well be advisable to have several students teach rather than just a single one whenever this can be arranged. One advantage appears to be that in this way each member of a group may be associated with the planning of one of the lessons given (for instance, if four out of 20 teach each lesson can be jointly planned by five students). Furthermore, each member of a group will teach on more occasions overall and this should help to develop his/her confidence (for instance, if four out of 20 teach each time and there are ten sessions altogether, each student will at least perform twice).* Finally, there will be more variety of feedback discussion so that members of the group will acquire a fuller understanding of the skill in question (i.e. a greater variety of points come up, etc).

Most of the tutors I talked to had the same length of time for the teach on each occasion (usually 5-10 minutes) regardless of the nature of the skill or lesson segment being treated on a particular occasion. In participatory microteaching situations, the actual length of time usually seems to be determined less by what a tutor regards as ideally desirable on a particular occasion as by administrative considerations i.e the total amount of time available and the number of students in a group (which itself has already been determined largely on administrative grounds). In vicarious microteaching situations, more flexibility should usually be possible since if more time is needed for teaches on a particular occasion, it can be obtained by reducing the number who teach (although in fact hardly any of the tutors talked to seemed to do this).*

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* There is also greater face validity which is important for motivation in a pre-service course. It is interesting that in the Stirling research mentioned above when some students taught and their partners did not, nevertheless "the majority view of students who attempted both was that one can learn about the use of a skill equally well or even better by working with someone else practising the skill, but that to acquire the skill oneself it was better to practise it through one's own teaching." This contrasts, however, with Clifford et al (1977) who report that their FL students at the University of Minnesota state that in their microteaching programme they feel others teaching is as valuable as actually teaching themselves.

2.2.2.2 Pupil considerations

In all the institutions where the microteaching is organised on an interdisciplinary basis by a 'professional studies' department and where general teaching skills are being practised, school children are used to form the practice class. These children are normally from the age range that the student will subsequently be teaching. Thus, at Stirling, they are first year secondary school pupils, and at Ulster Polytechnic second and third year secondary pupils; while at Dundee where the microteaching actually takes place in schools, students can choose which age-group and level of primary-school pupil they wish to teach. At Bulmershe where the students may be going on to teach in either primary or secondary schools, top-class primary school children are used in an attempt to satisfy both groups. With the same kinds of students at the New University of Ulster, primary-school pupils were formerly used in the first-semester microteaching and secondary-school children in the second semester. Now, however, that the second-semester practice has been stopped for administrative reasons, the students only practise with primary-school children. There is a certain degree of dissatisfaction about this amongst some tutors and students, especially since those pupils available are only about nine years old (top primary pupils not being available since they are preparing for selective secondary entrance).

In contrast, among the eleven FL/ELT subject departments or centres with microteaching programmes that I visited, only one used school children to form the class and even then only occasionally.** The others have peer-group classes instead. Sometimes such peer-group teaching is real teaching inasmuch as the pupils do not know the language being taught. In a number of modern language departments, for instance, one student teaches others a language they do not - or only partially - know. More often, however, peer-group teaching is a simulation with a student teaching English or another language to fellow-students who know it already.

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* Throughout this discussion of participatory and vicarious microteaching, it has been assumed that the tutor will always be present at each teach and critique for each student. An alternative procedure is to provide all the students with an opportunity to teach each skill but for the tutor not always to be present at the teach and the critique which will therefore be with the microteacher's peers only. The implications of supervisor presence or absence will be discussed later in 2.2.3.2 when we consider the critique session. However, certainly in the case of institutions where the student:tutor ratio is very high, it is obviously worth considering this possibility against that of vicarious microteaching. It is also possible to have a programme which begins with vicarious microteaching (so that the tutor is always present during the initial sessions) but which later changes to mainly tutorless sessions once the students have developed a certain self-sufficiency.

** Although another did use genuine adult pupils consisting of secretaries, telephonists and other employees in the university who wished to learn a foreign language.

Various reasons are given for using peer-group teaching. Some tutors say they do so partly, at least, for want of a better way because no suitable pupils are available (as in the case of British ELT courses), or because appropriate pupils cannot be released from their studies, or because it is difficult to arrange transport, and so on. (This last may be even more of a problem overseas in develping countries than in Britain.) In these circumstances some tutors are making use of peers as pupils because even though they are only substitutes, they do enable some form of microteaching to take place and this is considered preferable to non.

On the other hand, many tutors - including even some from among those who say it is not possible for them to use school pupils - feel that in some ways the use of peers is nevertheless preferable. Several reasons were put forwar by various tutors to whom I talked:

(a) It gives all the students a chance of being put more or less in the position of pupils and experiencing some of the concomitant difficulties. Indeed, Phillips (1975) describes how Greek-Cypriot primary school teachers on an in-service course found that being placed in the position of pupils made them realise better the kinds of demand they made on their own pupils.

(b) It develops confidence in the microteacher. A number of tutors felt that, at least for certain students, peer-teaching is initially less stressful than teaching children. Cammish (1973) suggests that in this way students are able to find their feet better than with real pupils. And, as Beattie and Teather (1971) point out, although some students may find performing in front of their peers embarrassing, those students who find such role-playing difficult are in fact those who need it most since there is a need for extraversion in foreign language teaching. (Phillips (1975) reports, moreover, that facing their peers was not the ordeal some of his course participants had feared.)

(c) It facilitates kinds of 'action analysis' which are impossible given a class of schoolchildren. Several ELT tutors I met take advantage of the absence of real pupils to have a 'talk-through, stop-and-start' session during which the tutor and also the teacher or members of the peer-group may stop the lesson from time to time in order to discuss points as they arise. The teacher can then continue, taking what has lesson before proceeding.* In some cases, the tutor may, since real pupils are not present, signal extensively to the teacher (as does Carl

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* Alatis (1974) and Clifford et al (1977) also describe this advantage of peer-group teaching in their accounts of FL microteaching at Georgetown University and the University of Minnesota respectively.

Dodson at Aberystwyth who has an elaborate system of signals to indicate that the teacher should change activity or speed, pay more attention to certain pupils etc).*

(d) In the case of FL/ELT subject-specific microteaching, it enables a student to practise teaching lessons not only of different kinds but also at different levels, which is vitally important when dealing with lesson segments rather than with general teaching skills. Peer-group teaching obviates the logistical problems of obtaining real pupils from been discussed into account or possibly reteaching a section of the a succession of different forms and also the larger problem for the microteacher of knowing the real level of achievement of the pupils in each successive class (as distinct from knowing where the class is supposed to have reached in a particular course). Obviously, without a clear idea of the real proficiency of his pupils it is not possible for a microteacher in a cumulative subject such as a language or mathematics to plan his lesson at an appropriate level. Really only a regular teacher can have a sufficiently precise knowledge of the level of the pupils, gained by long association with them (the only exception being with beginners). It would, therefore, seem preferable to use peers who can simulate the level of language ability which the microteacher has assumed in his pupils when he plans and delivers his lesson. In addition, when dealing with lesson segments, there may with real pupils be difficulty in getting to the segment that the microteacher wants to practise teaching. In order to get the pupils to produce new language, for instance, one must have prepared adequately for this (since each segment of a real lesson is only a link in a continuous chain). This together with the problem of appropriate level - is probably the main reason why so many FL/ELT microteaching programmes make use of peer-teaching (see Beattie and Teather (1971) and Cammish (1973)). In fact, Norris (1974) even suggests that "the sequential structure of language learning will probably militate against the widespread use of microteaching for training modern language teachers."**

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* While one tutor felt that not having real pupils enabled the micro-teacher to 'cut corners' when this was advantageous e.g by saying that if he were teaching a real class he would give several more examples of something, even though he doesn't in the microlesson (although the tutor insists that all these examples are included in the lesson plan).

** Of course the problem of not knowing precisely the level of proficiency of real pupils also occurs when the practising of general teaching skills is integrated with language teaching. At Stirling, for instance, where the microteaching programme takes place in the second half of the academic year, the Secondary 1 pupils who are used (and who are different each week since it is not considered fair to take them away from their schools more often) have been studying the modern language since the beginning of the year but may differ considerably in attainment both within a group and between groups. Since the microteacher does not know what their level of proficiency is until he meets them, he is obliged to assume - very unsatisfactorily - that they are complete beginners and plan his lesson accordingly.

Some tutors also said they felt that the use of real pupils in microteaching programmes is unfair to the children themselves since they will not gain much for all the time they spend. As Wragg (1974) points out, it is easy to forget that "the children need to get something out of the session, and a system where they are nothing more than teaching fodder for novices to experiment on is not a healthy example for students."

It is clear then, that there are considerable advantages to be gained by using peers as pupils especially in FL/ELT microteaching programmes (see Clifford et al (1977) who describe the success of such peer-group microteaching at the University of Minnesota and lament the fact that a number of FL teacher-training programmes in the United States have not introduced microteaching because of the difficulty of finding real pupils). Nevertheless, there are also certain disadvantages which were pointed out by various tutors to whom I spoke (especially those who used real pupils). The most frequently mentioned was the alleged 'artificiality' of peer teaching.* Of course one cannot dispute that peer-teaching is artificial in the sense of 'not lifelike'. On the other hand, it is possible to argue that microteaching with real pupils and even teaching practice are only marginally more so. We can only really object to peer-teaching on such comparative grounds if the students are thereby missing something which can only be provided by the use of real pupils. In this connection Perrott (1977) criticises peerteaching in as far as it "is of little use in helping the student to become accustomed to the type of response to be expected from school pupils". This would, of course, hardly apply to drill situations where the pupil has only to 'pat the ball back'. In some other activities, however, the responses of real pupils are obviously the only valid ones as is true in various communicative activities which are intended to get pupils actually talking as distinct from simply 'speaking' - and also when the teacher's reaction is determined by what the pupils say. It is also true that, as Carver and Wallace (n.d.) point out, if the critique sessions are to touch on questions such as 'What are the rest of the class doing while the teacher is talking to one pupil?' they should relate to practice with real pupils. A further danger with peers is that a microteacher may be led into going too fast and using language beyond what real pupils of the postulated age would be likely to know. I myself saw this happening during some peer-group teaching.

Lastly, research quoted by Brown (1975b) indicates that students who teach peers lose interest more markedly as the programme continues than do those who teach real pupils.

It would seem, therefore, that in a situation where real pupils are available, an ELT tutor setting up a microteaching programme will need to weigh very carefully the pros and cons of using peers and pupils. He may well feel that in many situations the two are complementary. For instance, he may decide

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* Indeed Gatenby (1951) even goes so far as to assert that "Merely to practise on each other with their lecturer as observer and critic is as artificial as the bandaging of wooden legs at a first-aid lecture" (although he does grudgingly admit that in the absence of other teaching experience "it is better than none").

to use peers at the beginning of the programme because this reduces stress and helps initially in developing the students' confidence. An instance of this approach is at the New University of Ulster where they used peer-group teaching for three sessions at the end of the first semester prior to the microteaching with real pupils in the third semester. Others who have reported the use of peers as being worthwhile initially before student-teachers encounter real pupils are Lawless (1971), Delorenzo (1973), and Gregory and White (1977). Subsequently, the tutor may feel that it is preferable to make use of both real pupils and peers. Real pupils would obviously be preferred for activities where genuine pupil responses are essential. When they are used it is, of course, necessary to ensure that students know as much as possible about their pupils. This can sometimes be facilitated by students being assigned the same pupils for each session and also by students having some contact with the pupils in addition to their microteaching sessions. For instance, the FL tutor at Hull takes a school class for all its French lessons and is therefore able to let her students watch her teaching it; she can also brief them about its current level of attainment when pupils from that class are going to be used in a microteaching session.* On the other hand, peers are - as we have seen - more suitable as 'pupils' when lesson segments of certain kinds are being practised and especially at levels for which pupils are not conveniently available or for segments when real pupils are not essential. For instance, the ML tutors at Hull and Stirling - while using real pupils for microteaching practice at beginners level - both use peers for microteaching practice at more advanced language levels. It is also possible that even when pupils of the requisite level are available, a tutor may prefer to use peers for the initial practising of a lesson which will subsequently be taught to the pupils. I saw an instance of this when I visited Hull, and it seemed to imbue the peer-group microteaching session with a real sense of purpose.

2.2.2.3 Tutor and peer considerations

In this section we shall consider the role of tutor and peers during the teach, firstly when real pupils are used and secondly when the peers act as 'pupils'.

(a) Role of tutor and peers when using real pupils

In almost all the programmes looked at which made use of real pupils, CCTV and recording facilities were employed. The arrangements seem to be of two main kinds. In the first, both the tutor and the teacher's peers watch on a monitor in the control room. In some cases, the tutor carries on a discussion with members of the group about the lesson in progress, while in other cases tutors deliberately do not attempt this. These last feel that the students are too anxious about their own forthcoming teach - or are too tensed up after having taught - to be in a good frame of mind to consider other students' teaching properly.* In the second, only the teacher's peers watch the monitor. In some cases, this is because the tutor cannot always be present because of other commitments, while in others it is by deliberate choice since the tutor feels that the students are thereby obliged to take the initiative in the critique session and do not simply wait for him to speak.

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* In most of the programmes that I looked at where real pupils are used, they number about five per class, and this stays constant throughout the programme. However, at Ulster Polytechnic, there was until this year a programme of what was called 'mini-teaching' during which the number of pupils increased gradually over a period of fifteen weeks from 5 to 25 (see Section 2.3).

There are, in addition, certain minor variations of these two main kinds th I came across. In one case microteaching sessions actually take place in schools and the tutor and members of the group watch from the back of the class while the tutor operates the portable video-recording equipment. In another where an audio-taperecorder is used, only the tutor watches the microteacher and operates the machine, while the other students in the grou prepare for teaching or recover from it in another room. In only one programme with real pupils was hardware not used, and the tutor and rest of the group necessarily watched each lesson from the back of the room.

For many students, particularly in the beginning, to be observed while teaching is undoubtedly rather nerve-racking. This is perhaps especially so when the student can actually see the observers at the back of the class, but it is also likely when, although he cannot see them, he knows they are watching from behind a one-way mirror or by means of CCTV. Obviously, if recording facilities are not available, then concurrent observation cannot be avoided - as will be the case in many institutions in developing countries. On the other hand, if they are available and the teach can thus be reinstated later, it is perhaps worth considering whether it might be preferable to eliminate concurrent observation, thus leaving a student free to perform without the feeling of having an eye constantly upon him. I did not, in fact, actually see this arrangement in operation anywhere, but it could be arranged fairly easily, as it is in Perrott's *Effective Questioning* course. Perhaps it could be left to individual students to decide what they would prefer.

(b) Role of tutor and peers when using peers as pupils

We shall look in turn at the number of students forming a class, the degree of role-playing by such 'pupils', and the presence or absence of the tutor.

(i) The number of students forming a class

In the programmes I looked at, the number of peers forming the class seemed to be determined largely by the size of the group, which in turn often seemed to be the outcome at least as much of administrative constraints as of professional concerns. Leaving aside the teacher himself and the camera operator, the class size was on average between six and ten. In most cases, there did not seem to be any marked preference amongst the tutors for having groups nearer the higher or lower end of this range. There were, however, a few tutors with distinct opinions on this. A couple deliberately arranged classes of only three, while a couple of others preferred to have classes of about fifteen since they felt this approximated more closely in feeling to a real class situation (c.f. Brown (1975b) who says that he prefers classes of 10-12 real pupils for the same reason).*

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* On the other hand, Alatis (1974) says that at the University of Georgetow School of Languages and Linguistics, where CCTV facilities are used to enabl observers to watch and discuss a lesson while it is actually in progress, the system works well there.

It would seem that the question of class size needs examination. In particular, it might be worth considering possibilities such as the gradual increase of numbers in the class during the course of the programme (as has been tried at Ulster Polytechnic, see 2.3), or allowing the microteacher to decide the number he prefers, either less than usual (one tutor whose norm for the class is ten allows this) or more than usual if additional 'pupils' are available. (It certainly seemed in one tutorless session which I attended that the class of four - three peers and myself - 'felt' too small, since several teachers in succession enlarged it by also putting questions to the student camera-operator.) When it seems necessary to reduce the size of a class considered too large by the tutor or the microteacher, the surplus members of the group not required as pupils can profitably take on the role of observers who can thus provide a different perspective on the lesson in the subsequent critique. Several tutors said that they preferred to have observers whether the class size really needed reducing or not because they felt the system had intrinsic value. In one instance this is done although there are only six peers available: three make up the class and the other three are detailed as observers to give an 'objective' report on the lesson.**

(ii) The degree of role-playing by peers

I found wide differences of opinion between tutors in this matter. They all agree that it is of course necessary to specify the age and level of the supposed pupils so that the microteacher and his group know what situation he is dealing with, but they do not agree about how far the peers should go in simulating the supposed behaviour of those pupils.

In FL/ELT microteaching, 'psychological' and linguistic role-playing by the 'pupils' are both possibilities. Very little of the first kind seems to be organised by tutors, and least of all of the variety when a particular role is assigned to each pupil. This kind of role-playing was, in fact, discontinued early in the Stanford programme because it was found that students could not maintain their roles.* Such 'psychological' role-playing as does occur seems to be of a far more generalised kind. For instance, in a ML microteaching session that I witnessed, the tutor told the class to feign boredom and restlessness if they thought the pace of the lesson would seem slow to real pupils. However, even this generalised kind of role-playing was only encountered in a couple of programmes and did not appear to be pursued in any great earnest even there.

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* One of the tutors who prefers at least 15 students also requires the 'pupils' to sit in two or three rows (rather than in a semicircle) to give the impression of a real class (in fact he may even arrange such things as a satchel surreptitiously left on the floor for the microteacher possibly to trip over as he might in a real classroom if he is not observant).

** It seems that what is not likely to be successful is to expect members of a class to take notes about points for discussion in the critique session in addition to playing the part of pupils. This has been tried on one course when each member of a group was required to submit to the tutor a written account of the lesson. The fact that the 'pupils' are busy jotting down points has not surprisingly been found to make it difficult for a teacher to have the full attention of the class and also for the pupils to follow the lesson properly.

On the other hand, most of the FL/ELT tutors when asked seemed to favour role-playing of a linguistic kind. As one tutor pointed out, it serves to increase realism in the practice since it ensures that the microteacher cannot always be certain of receiving the expected response. However, they differed in the degree of linguistic role-playing that they felt should be encouraged. All those tutors who were in favour of some linguistic role-playing seemed happy about the 'pupils' feigning, for instance, incomprehension if they thought real pupils of the intended level would not have understood. That this can provide effective feedback to the teacher I saw for myself in a French session when the microteacher had completely failed in her attempt to demonstrate the difference of meaning between 'devant' and 'derriere'. There is, however, less agreement about whether the 'pupils' should go a step further and deliberately make mistakes. While a few tutors encourage 'pupils' to commit the kind of errors of usage and use which typical pupils might and to give occasional wrong answers to a question if they think real pupils would, other tutors dislike this practice. Some feel that if it is taken too far, the microteaching session runs the risk of becoming artificial or even farcical, and as Cripwell (1979) points out, there is a danger of the 'pupils' concentrating too much on their own performance and not on what the microteacher is doing.** Obviously, a tutor can only judge for himself with his particular students how far he wishes to let them go, and he will have to be prepared to exercise a firm control over the situation if it appears to be getting out of hand with students overplaying their roles.

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* However, one geography tutor that I spoke to and who conducted microteaching with students in his department had very specific role-playing when each of the twelve or so students forming a class would take on the role of a particular pupil in a third-year mixed ability class in a comprehensive school e.g

> "Stephen Bromley. Age 13.5. Reading age 13.6. A friendly, talkative but immature boy whose thinking tends to be rather superficial. He can work well but is often distracted. Often asks irrelevant questions.
>
> Margaret Pickering. Age 13.5. Reading age 13.4. A 'loner' who only answers questions in class which are directed to her personally. She appears keen but rarely does her homework and makes little effort with her written work. Never communicates with her peers."

Since I did not see any session, I cannot say how effectively such role-playing operates.

** An additional problem peculiar to the British ELT microteaching programmes I looked at is that - unlike British FL or overseas ELT programmes - there is no obvious group of L2 learners whose linguistic behaviour might be simulated. Consequently, when a tutor has encouraged or allowed 'pupils' to make mistakes, the result has in some cases been very unnatural because of the heterogeneous nature of the mistakes.

It may, in some situations, be necessary actually to prime certain 'pupils' to make mistakes and answer in particular ways when the teaching procedure involved depends on pupil response. As we have said earlier, it is preferable with such topics to use real pupils, but where they are not available it may be better to use suitably-primed peers rather than have no practice at all. For instance, when the microteacher is practising prompts, probes and redirections relating to comprehension-passage answers, the tutor may need to prime certain of the students on how to respond rather than have a situation where everyone answers perfectly all the time.

Clearly, much investigation is still required into such matters as linguistic role-playing by peers, whether to assign a certain number of peers as observers, and whether students who have just taught or who are about to are in a suitable frame of mind either for role-playing or observing.

(iii) The presence or absence of the tutor

In the FL/ELT peer-teaching programmes that I looked at, the tutor is usually present during the teach. He may, however, choose to play very different roles. On the one hand, he may be directive and intervene a great deal (see 2.2.2.2); on the other, he may simply be an observer, perhaps operating the camera if it is a mobile one. Alternatively, he may assume another role altogether and act as one of the 'pupils'. Beattie and Teather (1971) say that at Liverpool they have found it "quite useful to have a tutor in the class as he can to some extent guide the pace and activity of the lesson by his questions, which will draw on his greater knowledge of what, for example, 13-year-old children actually do find difficult."

The tutor can, of course, choose to be absent during the teach. I encountered only one instance of this, however. At the London Institute of Education one of the ELT tutors on the PGCE course (Ken Cripwell) leaves each of his microteaching groups on its own with the task of producing for each of the five students in it a video-recording of his/her teach which the tutor later sees in a critique session. During the teach session, therefore, all members of a group assist in the formulation of the final recorded version of each student's lesson by giving advice at various points during his/her trial teach and cooperating in the recording of any parts which are not satisfactory. It is believed that in this way students will not feel intimidated during the teach by the tutor's preence; that their cooperative spirit and critical powers will be developed; and that during the critique each student will have the support of other members of the group who are also partly responsible for every individual's final recorded performance.

2.2.3 The critique component

In the microteaching programmes that I looked at, there was a tremendous diversity in the conduct of the critique session. In fact the New University of Ulster has a current research project to examine the nature of the critique session with special relation to their own microteaching programme which, with 37 tutors involved, embraces a wide range of approaches.* In the first part of this section, I shall consider the nature of the critique sessions in the programmes I looked at (2.2.3.1), while in the second part I shall consider some implications for microteaching programmes overseas (2.2.3.2).

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* There are, however, certain problems since some tutors are refusing to have their critique sessions video-recorded for analysis.

2.2.3.1 Nature of critique sessions in current programmes

I shall consider in turn the internal programming of the critique session, the kinds of feedback used, the matters dealt with, and the relative roles of tutor and students.

(a) Programming within the critique session

Two main ways of organising the teach and critique components emerged from the programmes looked at. The first way I shall refer to as the TC (teach-critique) type. In this arrangement a student teaches and then has his critique before the next student teaches and has his. The second type of arrangement I shall refer to as the TT (teach-teach) type. In this, each of the students concerned teaches in turn and when they have all taught, they have their critiques one after the other. About half of the programmes looked at were of the TC type and half of the TT type. A couple of tutors spoken to said that on occasions they also had a 'combination' of the TC and the TT types of organisation in a session when two or three students from a group would teach and then have their critiques in turn followed by the next two or three students going through the same procedure.*

There are in some cases practical reasons for choosing either the TC or the TT type of arrangement. If more than two or three students are going to teach and there are no mechanical recording facilities, the tutor may find it necessary to choose the TC type or at least the 'combined' arrangement, since it will otherwise be very difficult to remember in detail what happened in each student's lesson. Indeed, if more than five or so are to teach in one session, the tutor may feel that for variety alone the TC or 'combined' arrangement is preferable, even if recording facilities are availble. On the other hand, it may be necessary to use the TT arrangement if the recording equipment or studio is only available for long enough to fit in consecutive teaches (or if - as we shall see in 2.3.1.2 - the microteaching involves real pupils and takes the form of successive stages of a whole lesson).

However, in cases where such constraints do not operate, various professional reasons were given by tutors for and against using the TC or TT arrangements. Some felt that the TC arrangement has the advantage of enabling successive microteachers to benefit from the critiques of their predecessors. However, certain disadvantages were also mentioed. It was suggested that in some cases the microteacher may be tensed up so that he cannot profit to the full from a critique coming straight after the teach, while his peers who are perhaps waiting anxiously to teach may not be in the best frame of mind for dispassionate discussion. In addition, as Delorenzo (1975) has pointed out: "Peers, who themselves will soon assume the role of the microteacher, tend to be overly empathetic with their fellow-students. Consequently they often find it difficult to be constructively critical." An advantage of the TT arrangement was said to be the relatively relaxed state of the students in the critique sessions, which was more conducive to their participating profitably in their own critique and those of others. (A couple of tutors even prefer to postpone critique sessions to another day.)

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* A variant of the TT arrangement is used at Dundee where, instead of having separate critiques, the two or three students who form a microteaching group have a joint critique session in which the tutor considers the way in which all the students handled a particular aspect of a skill before he moves on to the next aspect.

Clearly, then, the arrangement adopted will depend on local situational factors, and especially on the emotional reactions of the students to microteaching. It is not easy to generalise, but it seems probable - as some tutors pointed out - that the degree of stress may depend to a large extent on how often the students teach and how far, therefore, the microteaching becomes a 'normal' event. The whole matter merits investigation, especially since it is widely claimed that microteaching provides the opportunity for practice in stress-free situations. This certainly did not seem to be the general view of the tutors to whom I spoke.*

(b) Kinds of tutor/peer feedback

Although, in the programmes I looked at, the tutor was not always present during the teach, he was almost always present for the critique - though his role during that session might vary considerably. The only exception was Stirling, where the students usually work in teams of two and it would be difficult for tutors to supervise all the microteaching sessions. The actual number at which a tutor is present depends on the student:tutor ratio in a particular subject, but the average is about a quarter of the total. The tutors feel that, provided the students are well-prepared, it is better to adopt this system rather than to try to stretch their resources to the limit in order to supervise them all (especially since research - including some at Stirling itself - is inconclusive about the value of supervisor feedback (see 2.2.3.2.b)).

In almost all cases, the microteacher's fellow-members of the group are also present during the critique, and they are familiar with the lesson to be discussed either from having observed it or from having acted as pupils for it. The only exception to this was at Jordanhill where the students were not familiar with their peers' lessons until they heard the audio recording of it made by the tutor. When there are observers at a lesson, some or all of a microteaching group may complete schedules designed to provide information about particular aspects of the lesson (see Appendix F for examples of some of the schedules used). In only a couple of instances did I find tutors who had an individual critique with a microteacher on his own (and these were special cases at the New University of Ulster where, as we have already seen, the teach and nearly always the critique are communal with the great majority of the tutors).

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* Nevertheless, some tutors apparently do not find emotional stress among the students to be a problem and do not therefore take it into consideration when deciding on a TC or TT arrangement. For instance, Broughton (1979) when describing the practice of some - but certainly not all - tutors at the London Institute of Education writes: "On the question of evaluation, we have used the technique of immediate playback and discussion after each performance, and also the alternative approach of recording all teachers before a longer viewing session. The advantage of the latter approach of a slight saving in time is generally outweighed by the immediacy of feedback in the former, which also lends itself better to the occasional reteach."

In none of those microteaching programmes which I looked at where real pupils were involved did the opinions of the pupils about the lessons appear to be sought. The only exception to this was at Keele where one of the FL tutors asks the co-opted adult pupils for their opinions on the teaching methods used.

(c) Kinds of mechanical feedback

In all the general skills programmes and well over half the FL/ELT programmes that I visited, the teach of each student was video-recorded. In some of the remaining FL/ELT programmes, video-recordings were only made at certain times. At Hull, for instance, video-recordings were made only after six sessions without it; the reason given for this was to allow students time to develop the necessary confidence first. In some programmes, on the other hand, the student is only video-recorded on the first one or two occasions on which he teaches so that he can "see what he looks like". And in some FL/ELT programmes, video-recording was not used at all for various pragmatic and professional reasons. For instance, certain tutors felt that video-recording did not warrant the difficulty and time-consumingness of setting-up the equipment; and/or that self-confrontation may be stressful and is therefore better avoided (a couple of tutors allow each student to decide whether or not to be video-recorded); and/or that audio feedback is perfectly adequate for those language teaching sessions when the verbal element is paramount. Dundas-Grant (1978) even seems to feel that her FL students at Keele do not need much feedback of any kind when she says that she does not use video-recording partly because it would not add anything to what she herself and other students can provide and also because "My student teachers seem to be perfectly aware of where their performances fall short of perfection and there are only a few unconscious idiosyncracies that need remedial treatment" (which is certainly a fortunate position to be in).

Where mechanical feedback is used, it seemed to be integrated in one of two principal ways by the tutors I talked to. The first - which was very frequent - is to begin by watching the video-recording or listening to the audio-tape before having a discussion of it. If time is available, the whole tape may be played back but if not, then selected parts. The second way which was equally frquent - is to stop the tape at intervals so that the playback is interspersed with comment and discussion. If time is available, the whole of the tape may be played through in this way (although it may sometimes happen that the latter part has to be dealt with rather hastily or even omitted). If not, or if the tutor prefers, only certain prenoted parts of the lesson may be played back and discussed. A third way - which was only met in a couple of instances - is to discuss the lesson and refer to the tape only if this is felt necessary in connection with particular matters. This last procedure is, of course, only possible when both tutor and peers have already seen the lesson.

(d) Matters dealt with in critique sessions

As we saw in 2.2.1.1, microteaching programmes can be plotted along a continuum between the extremes of 'no specified model' and 'a precisely specified model'. The point at which a programme falls along this continuum depends on what the tutor considers the needs and abilities of his students to be and on what his aim therefore is in a microteaching session. In a critique session, the nature of the matters dealt with and the approach adopted, as in briefing, depends on the tutor's aim.

In cases where the tutor feels it preferable to be more exploratory and less specific, the critique session is concerned to a greater extent with the way in which the student chose to approach the skill or lesson segment. This means that the tutor and students consider the appropriateness of the approach and whatever pedagogic problems and issues have been raised by it.* In cases where the tutor feels it preferable to be more specific and prescriptive (and where the briefing therefore consists of detailed instructions about what the microteacher should do), the tutor and peers are concerned in the critique session largely with considering how closely the teacher approximated to the behaviour specifications and also perhaps with reiterating his instructions, either as a preparation for a reteach or as general guidance.

In practice, however, although the critique sessions incline more towards one or the other - and the pre-service microteaching programmes which I looked at generally tended towards the more specific and prescriptive - none seemed to be completely of one kind. Even in a very specific and prescriptive programme in which most of a critique session is concerned with considering how closely the teacher's behaviour approximated to the model, one or two of the points raised may occasionally be wider ranging and lead to discussion of broader issues. For instance, in one session which I attended, the students, who had been considering the techniques used for choral substitution drills in a peer's lesson, suddenly began to discuss whether such drills should be used and when. Similarly, even in a less specific, more exploratory microteaching programme, some of the points considered may relate at times to the microteacher's approximation to a norm which, even though not overtly stated, is nonetheless tacitly assumed. For instance, the tutor or other students may draw the teacher's attention to the fact that he was inaudible, or that he repeated himself a great deal.

When specific matters relating to a lesson are being discussed, some tutors concentrate on the more central and significant issues while others seem to bring in a number of peripheral and relatively unimportant matters. How far the latter is the case probably depends on the personal quality of the tutor.

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* Wallace and Carver (n.d.), when describing the extemely open-ended, exploratory microteaching programme which they use with trained and experienced teachers at Moray House, mention how they may have "a wide-ranging and discursive mini-tutorial" during which problems and issues raised by the teaching session are discussed. They give as examples of topics which might arise: "Should we ask for long or short answers?" "Should we correct a pupil who makes a grammatical mistake when he gives the right answer?"

(e) The roles of tutor and students in the critique session

The tutor may, of course, not be present at the critique, as happens quite often at Stirling. When he is present, however, the question immediately arises as to the nature and extent of his control of the session. At one extreme the critique may be simply a peroration by the tutor, when he tells the microteacher and other students what he thinks about the lesson. At the other extreme, the tutor may hand over the discussion entirely to the students and withdraw to the position simply of observer. I did not come across situations quite as extreme as either of these, although a couple tended noticeably towards one or other of them.*

In the majority of the programmes I looked at, the tutor normally 'chaired' the critique session himself, but different tutors - and even the same tutor on different occasions - varied in the degree to which as chairman they controlled and dominated the situation. In cases where the critique session is relatively more controlled by the tutor, he may introduce the matters for discussion, put questions to the microteacher, and analyse and comment a great deal himself, so that the session easily becomes, if not a peroration, at least a dialogue between the tutor and the microteacher with very little being contributed by the other students. On the other hand, in cases where the critique session is comparatively less controlled by the tutor, he may operate as chairman by inviting comments and suggestions from the microteacher himself and from other students. A procedure which many tutors told me they followed - in the course of the discussion following a viewing of the whole videotape or after each part selected for consideration - is to begin by asking the microteacher if he has any comments; once he has given these, the tutor throws the session open for general discussion during which he himself usually refrains from commenting, reserving his own remarks until towards the end of the session when he may also raise further points and introduce wider implications. This procedure seems to be very widely followed. Brown and Armstrong (1975) call it the

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* On a course for Ivorean teachers of English at Moray House, the tutor has a structured system of handing over to the students. For each critique he appoints two 'critique leaders' who decide on the organisation of the session whilst he himself simply sits in as a member of the group, putting up his hand if he wishes to make a point and so on. The tutor believes this system leads to better discussion - in spite of the rather dominative and prescriptive attitude of some of the critique leaders - because the students feel they can talk back to the leaders more than they could to a member of staff. (Another interesting procedure used on the Ivorean programme is that each student is expected to write an account of each lesson and of the critique sesison which follows it.)

'Listen and Tell approach' and say that it is much used at the New University of Ulster.*

Thus critique sessions appear to divide into kinds according to whether they are more open and exploratory or more specific and prescriptive in what they deal with (as we saw in the previous section) and whether they are more or less directly controlled and dominated by the tutor (as we have seen in this section). The degree of prescriptiveness in a critique session tends to be associated with the goals implicit in the whole programme (and especially with the nature of the briefing), and not necessarily with the degree of tutor control in the actual session. For instance, a tutor may say little or nothing during the critique but, if he has set up a model in his briefing to which the students are attempting to approximate, these students are still operating within a prescriptive context. Similarly, although a tutor may set up a situation where the critique is normally wideranging and nonprescriptive, he may occasionally intervene to comment proscriptively even though not prescriptively - especially if a student teaches in an extremely eccentric manner.

Whether the tutor is more or less dominant in the critique, he may when he talks concentrate more on the teacher's strengths or on his weaknesses or about equally on both. However, although there were obviously personal differences of style between the tutors I spoke to, there appeared to be an overall tendency for the tutor to concentrate on the strengths of a lesson, especially in the case of less confident students. In those critiques where the students do most of the talking, the tutors concerned generally agreed that their usual strategy is one of attempting to redress the balance. For instance, if the other students are critical of the lesson or if - as is more likely - the microteacher is very critical of himself (since there seems to be a tendency for better students to be self-critical while peers tend to be undercritical and supportive), the tutor deliberately emphasises the strong points of the lesson. If, on the other hand, the discussion is not critical enough, the tutor may well point out certain weaknesses during his subsequent remarks.

All the tutors with whom it was discussed agreed on the desirability of the tutor having a less controlling role for many reaons. They felt among other things that students are then better able to develp their critical and self-evaluative faculties; that they learn to accept and profit from peer-group criticism, and that overall they attain a greater degree of understanding and acceptance than would otherwise be achieved. How far this avowed ideal is maintained in all cases is difficult to determine. I suspect that some tutors tend to slip into a controlling role at times, which may be induced by factors in particular microteaching situations. Time, obviously, is one such factor. In some microteaching programmes, the length of time available for each view and critique is so short (as little as 5-6 minutes following a teach of the same length) that it is difficult to see how there can be anything other than an enumeration of certain points by the tutor. (This contrasts with other programmes where the time for each lesson critique may be much more ample, even in a couple of cases being as long as half-an-hour after a teach of 5-10 minutes.) Another factor which may induce the tutor to assume a more central and controlling position than he really believes desirable is probably inherent in one kind of organisation of the video feedback. When the tape is played back and stopped at various points for discussion, there is a potential danger of the tutor dominating this discussion since, as he sits or stands by the side of the monitor, he is inevitably the focus of attention (in contrast to the procedure when the whole of the video-recording is watched first and the tutor can sit within the group during the subsequent discussion). Moreover, it is the tutor who stops the tape at points which he feels merit discussion, and he also probably determines how much discussion there should be since he decides when to resume the viewing of the tape.* Obviously, as I saw in certain cases, this can easily lead to the critique becoming a dialogue between the tutor and microteacher with relatively few contributions and little initiative coming from other members of the group who, even when they do speak, are more likely to address their remarks to the tutor rather than to discuss them amongst themselves. It might be possible to get over this problem by having students in turn operate the video-recorder with anyone free to ask for the tape to be stopped for discussion, but I did not come across this anywhere.

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* An interesting alternative procedure which I came across operated at the International Teacher Training Institute in London. After a succession of six students have taught continuously for a total of some 1½-2 hours (to real adult learners), there is a critique session for a further hour which several tutors organise as follows: 1) pairs of students discuss each other's performance from notes that each has made about the other 2) the tutor in due course gives each pair a copy of his remarks sheet about their lessons, which they also discuss 3) finally the tutor and six students have a plenary discussion about the whole teaching session. The director of the Institute said she felt that the discussion in pairs encouraged a great deal of frankness and honesty by the students, especially since each was not only criticising but being criticised at the same time.

2.2.3.2 Consideration of factors affecting the critique session

Having looked in 2.2.3.1 at what is actually happening in the critique sessions of current microteaching programmes, I shall now consider some issues which influence the choice of the form of mechanical and human feedback, with particular reference to microteaching programmes overseas.

(a) Mechanical feedback

One of the main questions likely to arise in overseas teacher-training institutions if they are thinking of introducing microteaching in ELT courses is how valuable is video feedback, since the equipment for it is undoubtedly expensive. Unfortunately it is difficult to give any clear and satisfactory answer on the basis of the numerous research studies that have been undertaken. This is partly because of their conflicting results (probably due in part to the varying microteaching situations involved) and also because they are all concerned with programmes of general teaching skills rather than subject-specific ones. In addition, the assumption is that all students will be teaching each skill whilst, as we have seen, vicarious microteaching may, in fact, have certain advantages in some situations more usual in overseas, developing countries than in Britain. Finally, we have to remember that in all cases the criterion of effectiveness is fairly immediate behaviour change; whereas if we adopt a cognitive perspective of microteaching, immediate behaviour change or its lack is not a reliable measure of feedback being effective. However, bearing in mind these limitations, we will look in turn at those research findings which may have some relevance to the choice of mechanical feedback (both video and audio).

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* Of course, in microteaching programmes where a relatively high degree of specificity and precriptiveness is considered desirable, the 'stop/restart' type of video playback may in some ways be preferable (as one of the tutors on the special course for Saudi Arabians at Moray House felt, since a microteacher's adherence to the procedural stages of the specified model can then be followed through step by step).

McAleese and Unwin (1971) when reviewing the research on video feedback conclude: "Guidance on the effectiveness of providing sound and vision to conduct microteaching without video feedback, the video-recorder provides a useful embellishment"; while according to Stones and Morris (1972) "The discussion session after the microlesson is perfectly viable even in the absence of the video-recording....It is generally agreed, however, that the availability of video-recording enhances the effectiveness and flexibility of microteaching." The main benefit of video feedback according to those in favour of it - seems to be its ability to reinstate the microlesson after the event (and as many times as required) so that a relatively objective account is available of what happened and the teacher can see for himself how he managed. This has advantages over simply hearing unsubstantiated comments from observers with whom he may disagree about what actually happened; and if he is therefore not himself aware of what he did, he is unlikely to be able to accept and incorporate any suggestions for improvement which are made. As Cammish (1973) says in relation to her experience at Hull: "Far more notice was taken of the videotapes objective revelations than of the supervisor's comments on teaching practice. 'Now I see what you meant!' was the constant cry, particularly where pace was concerned."*

On the other hand, some research casts doubt on the value of video feedback. For instance, Clift et al (1976) describes an experiment at Monash University in Australia to determine the relative effectiveness of a critique with the supervisor alone, the supervisor and an audiotape replay, and the supervisor and a videotape replay, where there were no significant differences between any of the groups although they all improved. Various reasons are furthermore advanced for not using video feedback at all. For instance, Travers (1975) says that students are unable to free themselves from the 'cosmetic effect': "Individuals who see themselves in live action on a screen....typically become preoccupied with the appearance of their body and fail to take note of the behaviour they see and the consequences of that behaviour." Some writers even think self-viewing may actually be harmful. Nias (1974) warns that self-confrontation initially produces reactions of fear, anxiety and distress which in the case of teachers with a low level of self-satisfaction and self-esteem may make them even more self-deprecating and fearful (while those most likely to benefit from self-confrontation are those with an aptitude for teaching and a positive self-image - a case of the rich getting richer and the poor poorer). Fuller and Manning (1973) also feel that selfconfrontation is not of equal benefit to all kinds of students: "Effects on performance are complex. Sometimes performance is improved, and sometimes it is disrupted. The effects of self-confrontation on performance seem to depend upon characteristics of the person, the feedback and the playback, and perhaps of processes not yet understood."

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* And as Stones and Morris (1972) point out, it is possible with video to reinstate the teach not only immediately but several days after the event and still conduct a satisfctory critique session (although Stones and Morris say more investigation is needed as to the exact conditions when this is so). In this way, the critique may take place 'in tranquility', as we have seen some tutors prefer. On the other hand, some tutors believe that feedback must be immediate if it is to be effective. For instance, Perrott (1974b) holds that "research generally indicates that a relatively long delay between performance and evaluation usually results in poorer learning."

In contrast, however, other microteaching researchers feel that the undesirable effects of self-confrontation are short lived. For instance, A J Trott told me that his research at Bulmershe with first year B.Ed students showed a definite decrease in cosmetic effect after two or three weeks (and a slight rise in it after the Christmas vacation soon disappeared). In a study of students at Stirling, MacLeod (1977a) found that although some form of cosmetic effect does exist, its importance seems "considerably less than Fuller and Manning suggest"; indeed, MacLeod notes that trainees focus to a considerable extent on teacher behaviour with a substantial and increasing focus on pupil behaviour so that, in direct contradiction to Travers, one might say of student-teachers that "Typically they become preoccupied with the behaviour they see and the consequences of that behaviour and fail to take note of the appearance of their body." Moreover, Stanton (1978) - in investigations with student-teachers at the University of Tasmania - found that the use of video feedback helped to develop a positive self-concept since those who felt nervous saw that they did not actually appear so.

As for student opinions about video feedback, surveys at both Stirling and the New University of Ulster have shown very favourable reactions. McIntyre and Duthie (1977) report that of 128 Stirling students whose views were sampled as to how valuable they considered video feedback in addition to comments by tutors or peers, 80% considered it very valuable, 16% fairly, 3% not very, and only 1% not at all. At the New University of Ulster, Brown (1975b) reports that amongst the students he sampled who considered microteaching valuable, the most commonly expressed reason for favouring it was 'the opportunity to see oneself teach'. Brown says that: "In the initial stages, self-confrontation might evoke some anxiety in participants, but in this writer's experience, only three out of over 500 students have reacted very strongly against seeing themselves microteach. In all three cases sympathetic help and encouragement reduced their fears." Gregory (1971) found from questionnaires he gve to his students in Rhodesia that they felt the microteaching sessions which were video-recorded to be more valuable than those that were not (although these too were felt to be of value).

However, even if a tutor - having weighed up such findings - feels that video feedback does have something worthwhile to recommend it in his particular ELT training situation, he should still consider carefully whether his students might not derive comparable benefit at much less cost from audio feedback. Although many people would agree with McAleese (1973) when he says that "microteaching is...found to be more effective if both sound and vision recording can be made", there is some research evidence that this is not always so. It is of considerable significance for ELT teacher-training in the poorer developing countries that some researchers have found that audio feedback has as much, if not perhaps more, to offer in respect of verbal skills. Reviewing such research, Griffiths (1977b) points out that "...the evidence provided does show that audiotape feedback can be as effective and sometimes more effective than videotape feedback within the verbal domain" (while he adds that "This is unlikely to be true for nonverbal skills, but as yet there is little evidence available"). Brown (1975b) - after reviewing research on the subject - comes to a similar conclusion: "It is likely that the effectiveness of the types of mechanical feedback depends on the nature of the skill being practised. Predominantly verbal skills such as questioning might effectively be changed by audiotape." Perrott (1977) makes the same point although she does say that in spite of equal effectiveness, satisfaction has been shown to be greater with video-recordings. Perlberg (1976) also thinks that "...there is research evidence to support the thesis that in most cases there was no difference between audio and video feedback, and in some cases when the training focussed on verbal skills, audio feedback alone was even more effective."

One possible reason for these findings is that students concentrate harder on listening when the visual element is not present. Professor Perrott, for instance, told me that in their analysis of teaching sessions on 'effective questioning', her research assistants revealed an increasing reliance on audio feedback even though video feedback was available. Another possible reason, given by Fuller and Manning (1973), is that for tasks which are predominantly verbal, audio feedback is less stressful and therefore probably more useful.

Nevertheless, as Griffiths (1977b) points out: "Further studies are needed to identify which applications are particularly suited to video feedback and which may be handled as well or better by audio feedback", while Brown (1975b) warns that this "is unlikely to prove simple for it is not the use of videotape or audiotape per se so much as the use to which they are put which determines their effectiveness."

Research evidence for the advantages and disadvantages of video and audio feedback is, then, largely inconclusive. Nevertheless, on the basis of what we have considered, we might tentatively suggest that, in the case of an ELT department overseas if money is available for the purchase of video equipment, it will probably be worth getting it (provided, of course, that funds are also available for its subsequent maintenance and that spare parts and the services of a technician are readily obtainable). However, it must not be assumed that such equipment will necessarily be effective. Whatever effectiveness it possesses will depend on how the whole microteaching programme is organised. It will also be advisable not to insist on video-recording any students who say that they prefer not to have it (which Nias (1974) says was her own practice at Liverpool). And for other students, it may be better to postpone communal viewing of their teaches until each has had an individual private viewing first, which may be possible in a TT system that has a couple of days delay between the teach and the critique. On the other hand, an institution which cannot afford video-recording equipment may nevertheless be able to provide audio tape-recorders. It would seem that these are well worth using since, as we have mentioned, research evidence tends to suggest that audio feedback can be as effective - and sometimes more effective - than videa feedback in the case of skills which involve mainly verbal behaviour. Indeed, audio tape-recorders are being used in a number of microteaching programmes where the cost of video-recording apparatus is prohibitive; while Professor Perrott told me that the recent trials in India of a specially adapted version of her Effective Questioning course, in which audio feedback (as well as audio modelling) is used, have been very successful.

Finally, if neither video nor audio tape-recorders are available, feedback sessions can - as we shall see in the next section - still be very successfully conducted using the information gathered by the various observers. As C J Lawless (1971) has written of his PGCE microteaching programme at the University of Malawi Soche Hill College: "The feedback provided by discussion with a tutor and a group of observers has been found to be extremely effective. CCTV might add something to these discussions but probably not sufficient to justify the cost and effort required to obtain and run it."

(b) Human feedback

Some doubts have been expressed as to whether students who have had adequate briefing and also have access to mechanical forms of feedback require human feedback as well. McKnight (1971) and McAleese (1973) both raise the question in their reviews of research into microteaching, while McAleese and Unwin (1971) say that at the New University of Ulster some trainees were quite capable of accurate self-evaluation. Perrott - albeit with in-service teachers - relies on self-evaluation in her Effective Questioning course, with a teacher replaying twice each video-recording of his/her teach and reteach and each time completing a Teacher Evaluation form.

On the other hand, there are many people who feel that mechanical feedback is not effective on its own and that it is necessary to have human feedback as well. Nias (1974) has pointed out that unless there is someone to provide focus, a teacher watching a video-recording of his lesson may perceive his own behaviour only in a superficial way and fail to detect the points of difference between his performance and the 'ideal'. In connection with the use of video recordings on teaching practice with her students at Liverpool, she says: "Discernible change results from playback only when myself or another member of the group is present to provide focus..." MacLeod (1977b) describes attempts at Stirling to determine what effects videotape and interaction analysis feedback have on students' perceptions of their microteaching performance. The results seem to suggest that "the effects of both video and skill-related feedback within microteaching programmes are perhaps less potent than has been assumed." In fact, very few differences were found between the comments on their lessons made by those students who had no feedback and the comments made by those who had either video feedback or FIAC feedback or both. MacLeod and McIntyre (1977, reprinted in McIntyre et al 1977) tentatively postulate reasons for this:

> "5. New concepts and ways of perceiving teaching are acquired largely as a result of instruction, but new principles and ways of evaluating teaching are acquired not only from instruction but also from students' perceptions of what actually occurs in their microteaching lessons; and where these two influences conflict, it is the latter which predominates.

6. Since the constructs in terms of which students will perceive their lessons are largely determined before they teach the lessons, the kinds of mechanical or descriptive feedback with which they are provided will have only little influence on the nature of their perceptions or therefore on their subsequent teaching behaviour.

7. Since students' evaluations of the effects of teaching behaviour and consequently their evaluations of it, are influenced by what happens in their lessons, the interpretation and judgements of others on lessons they have taught, and the alternatives they offer, are potentially influential factors in students' learning."

A student-teacher's conceptual schemata may, then prevent him from perceiving a video-recording of his lesson any differently from when he planned and presented the lesson. In order to change his way of looking at his performance, he may therefore need the perceptions and interpretations of others. Perrott and Duthie (1970), writing about preservice students, compare a student's inability to perceive his own performance on video objectively with what Abercrombie (1960) describes among medical students who may have difficulty in interpreting X-rays without assistance from someone.

However, even when it is felt that some kind of human feedback is advisable, it still has to be decided whether this is better provided by the tutor or peers or both.* Griffiths (1977b), after reviewing the research to date on the value of peer feedback, concludes: "Obviously much more research is needed before any conclusions can be reached concerning the contribution of peer feedback to the effectiveness of microteaching", pointing out that comparatively little has been done so far. Nonetheless, many people concerned with microteaching - including some of the tutors I talked to - attach great importance to the role of peers in critique sessions. They say that peers provide relevant feedback, especially since most often they are themselves currently concerned with teaching the same kind of lesson and, even when they have been only observers as in a vicarious microteaching situation, they still have a closer understanding of the teacher's problems than some tutors may have. It is also suggested that a student may well be prepared to accept comment more readily from his peers than from his tutor. Peers can also contribute - as Gregory and White (1977) point out by being supportive so that the teacher suffers less, for instance, from an overcritical and/or insensitive tutor than he would in an individual tutorial situation. Also, as Carver and Wallace (n.d.) say, the presence of peers takes a lot of the tension out of the situation in that remarks need not always be directed specifically at the microteacher. In addition, it seems that Stanton (1978) has found in his work with student-teachers at the University of Tasmania, that a critique involving peers helps to develop a positive self-concept since the realisation that their own problems and fears were shared by others reduced the students' feelings of personal inadequacy. In addition to being of value to the microteacher, a critique involving interaction between him and his peers benefits the peers too. (This is especially the case with vicarious microteaching, and the communal critique is then essential.) They all learn from each other and, as Gregory and White suggest, such groupwork also initiates the students into working in a small peer-group for professional purposes.

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* Nor should the possiblity of feedback from pupils be ignored. As I said earlier, except with the adult learners at Keele, I have not found any instance of this myself, although it seems fairly common in the USA. Griffiths (1977b) says there is American evidence that it can lead to change in teacher behaviour, although there appeared a tendency for pupils to assess student-teachers too favourably. Morrison and McIntyre (1973) suggest that pupil feedback may only be effective when the same pupils are involved in the microteaching over a considerable period and can be trained in the use of rating scales or other instruments. Griffiths concludes that more groundwork needs to be done before the contribution of pupil feedback can be assessed. It is, however, unlikely that even if pupil feedback could be shown to be effective, it would be acceptable in many cultural and educational situations overseas.

The general opinion seems, then, to be in favour of peer-group feedback. At the same time, however, there appear to be doubts as to whether a tutor can provide anything useful in addition to it. McIntyre (1977b) describes an investigation at Stirling designed to assess the relative effectiveness of the involvement of a supervisor in a student group's observation, analysis and discussion of lessons compared with when the supervisor was absent and a group worked alone. He says: "It was found that the acquisition of skills did not appear to be influenced by the presence or absence of tutors; and students' evaluations of observed teaching seemed to be influenced by working with a tutor in only one of 18 assessed characteristics, those with tutors tending to suggest more alternative teaching behaviours."

However, even though research findings at Stirling support the contention that performance is not significantly improved by the presence of a supervisor, students still tended to want one. As McIntyre (1977b) continues "Nonetheless, most students considered it advantageous to have a supervisor, mainly so that they might have the benefit of authoritative guidance; and this felt need for a supervisor was clearly reflected in the lower morale of those who had worked without one." It can be concluded, therefore, that even though students' wishes are in themselves not a sufficient basis upon which to build an effective programme, a programme which does not take them into account is less likely to succeed. Because of the findings at Stirling, Perrott (1977) says that she feels supervisors do have a necessary role to play with pre-service students although she does not consider them necessary with in-service teachers.*

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* McAleese (1976) also says that in work at the University of Aberdeen he has found that students without a supervisor, although improving their performance, thought they were doing so more than did a supervisor looking at their videotapes. He likens this to the 'freewheeling' effect which may be true generally of unsupervised work, and concludes that leaving students unsupervised may be counterproductive.

It is clear, then, that the presence of the tutor is not something that is just to be assumed. There is room for debate about how necessary his presence is during the teach and critique. The value of his presence or absence will need to be considered in relation to the student:tutor ratio. When there is a high ratio, vicarious microteaching is a possiblity (although, as we considered in 2.2.2.1, this assumes that the tutor's presence is necessary at each teach and critique). An alternative procedure is to give all the students the opportunity to teach each time but for the tutor not to be present on every occasion. For instance, in a situation where there are 20 students to a single tutor, the students might - after the pre-teaching activities - divide into four equal subgroups which could practise simultaneously in separate places, visited in turn for a short period by the tutor who could arrange his visits so as to see the performance of and conduct the critique for a different student on each occasion. Indeed, some people feel that in tutorless critique sessions students may develop their self-evaluative critical faculties - which are essential for any future professional growth - better than in a situation where they perhaps expect their tutor to tell them what he thinks. On the other hand, when there is a lower student:tutor ratio and it is possible for all the students to teach with the tutor present throughout, it may be preferable for him to be there. However, whether his presence adds anything of direct value to the critique or is simply supportive is clearly open to discussion. The effectiveness of the immediate supervisory feedback will probably vary according to the individual strategy employed and how appropriate it is for the needs of the particular students.*

In connection with supervisory strategies, it is interesting to note the results of another piece of research from Stirling reported by Griffiths et al (1977). It describes an investigation of four such strategies, viz direct/strengths, indirect/strengths, direct/weaknesses, and indirect/weaknesses. 'Direct' meant that the supervisor took the initiative in analysing and commenting on a lesson whereas 'indirect' meant that he encouraged the student to analyse and evaluate the lesson himself with the supervisor's comments being limited to reactions to what the student said; while 'strengths' meant that the supervisor attempted to make reinforcing comments on skill-appropriate behaviour whereas 'weaknesses' meant that he attempted to suggest or to lead the student to suggest alternative courses of action in order to use the skill more or to use it more effectively. The results from the observed reteaches of four groups of students which had each been subject to one of the four supervisory strategies did not show any significant difference on any of the criterion measures (with one minor exception). However, questionnaire data showed that in all cases students tended to want what they had not been given i.e. if the supervision had been 'direct', they wanted more opportunity to discuss their own perceptions; if it had been 'indirect', they wanted to know more about how the supervisor had perceived the lesson; if they had supervision which concentrated on 'strengths', they wanted advice on how they could improve their use of the skill; and if they had had supervision which concentrated on 'weaknesses' and suggested alternatives, they wanted to know what they were already doing well. Thus, the way in which all the students responded to this questionnaire showed them to be information processors who were eager for a variety of different kinds of information. What I was told about student responses to different kinds of supervision by the lecturer in charge of microteaching at the New University of Ulster can perhaps be interpreted as showing the same tendency. He said that on the one hand some students complain to him that their tutors never say anything except 'What do you think about that?', while other students complain that their tutors always tell them what to do!

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* As already mentioned in 2.2.2.1, when there is a high student:tutor ratio there may be advantages in having a programme which begins with vicarious microteaching so that the tutor is always present to give support to the microteachers during the initial sessions but which later changes to mainly tutorless sessions once the students have developed a certain self-sufficiency.

It would seem advisble, then, for a tutor to vary his strategy even within a single critique. At the same time, it would seem a good idea if possible to have a general progression over the course of a pre-service microteaching programme from 'direct' to 'indirect' and from concentrating on strengths to concentrating more on alternatives. As Brown (1975a) says: "Put simply, the role of the supervisor is to help a student to improve his own teaching. His role therefore subtly changes during the training programme. In the early stages, he usually needs to be particularly encouraging and supportive. As the student learns to analyse and improve his skills the supervisor gradually withdraws his support - but not his encouragement. By the end of the programme the student should be able to analyse and suggest improvements with virtually no help from the supervisor.

In short the supervisor should try to work himself out of a job." And he adds: "Let it be said at once that this approach is not based upon research evidence."

2.2.4 The reteach component

In the first part of this sectin I shall consider the nature of the reteach and recritique sessions in those programmes that I looked at which had such sessions (2.2.4.1), while in the second part I shall consider some of the factors which affect possible reteach and recritique sessions (2.2.4.2).

2.2.4.1 Nature of reteach sessions in current programmes

According to the original Stanford procedure, the five-minute teach and ten-minute critique were followed - after an interval of fifteen minutes for replanning - by a five-minute reteach and a ten-minute recritique. Each student had two such 45-minute sessions for a particular skill and therefore four occasions on which to practise it. The reason for the reteaches was to enable the student gradually to approximate to the model provided of the skill through reinforcement of desirable behaviour.

However, very few of the microteaching programmes that I looked at have a regular reteach session. Those that do include Stirling and the history department at Jordanhill (at both of which places real pupils are used) and Moray House on the special TEFL course for Saudi Arbians (where peers act as pupils and there has to be a complicated system to ensure a fresh class in the reteach). It is significant that in all three places all the members of a group teach all the skills or lesson segments rather than having a vicarious system of microteaching. The tutors concerned with these programmes felt that, although they looked at microteaching from a cognitive rather than a behaviourist viewpoint, reteaches were valuable. The general opinion among them seemed to be that improvements in performance could be seen in the retaches, although not in the case of every student. McIntyre and Duthie (1977) report that of 128 Stirling students whose opinions were sampled about how valuable they considered the reteach was in practising skills, the replies were 52% very valuable, 30% fairly, 14% not very and 3% not at all. In addition to these three programmes, a couple of other ones that I looked at have a selective reteach only for those students for whom the tutor considers it necessary (and if they are still not showing improvement, they may even have a further reteach).

Apart from these programmes, all of the other programmes visited had either abandoned the reteach or never had one. A variety of reasons were given for this, influenced to a greater or less degree by professional and/or administrative considerations. For instance, at both the New University of Ulster and Bulmershe, the tutors in charge of microteaching considered the reteach to be of potential value in bringing about changes in behaviour but that - given the time available and the existing tutor:student ratios something in their programmes would have to go in order to accommodate a reteach so that the programmes as a whole might be no more - and possibly less - effective than at present. They did not feel it would be advantageous either to reduce the number of skills dealt with in their programmes or to keep the same number of skills but reduce the length of time spent on the existing parts of a microteaching session (briefing, teach, critique) in order to accommodate reteaches. Nor did they apparently consider feasible any change from the current system at their institutions, whereby every student teaches each skill, to some form of vicarious teaching in order to gain time. Obviously the reteach was not considered absolutely essential. Indeed, A J Trott at Bulmershe told me that he did not have any reteaches because there was too much to talk about in respect of the teach and since time was limited it was impossible to do everything. He did say, however, that if more time were available, he would have a reteach in preference to introducing further skills. Similarly, at the New University of Ulster, G Parry told me that if the tutor:student ratio were more favourable, he would like to have a reteach but he would not wish to change the present programme in order to include it.

In contrast with the New University of Ulster and Bulmershe, other programmes did not have a reteach because the tutors concerned felt it would not be of any great value for their purposes even were it possible for them to include it. There was a general feeling that, if one is concerned in microteaching primarily with developing awareness of skills rather than with securing immediate behaviour change, a reteach is not essential. For instance White (1975), after outlining his plan for a weekly microteaching programme, says "There is no provision for a reteach performance, the objective being to build up an understanding of the nature of the skills concerned"; while earlier in his article he has explained that, in view of the complexity of teaching and the shortness of time available for practice, one cannot hope to develop the necessary skills in a microteaching programme but that one's aim should be rather a conceptual understanding of their nature "leaving the development of individual skill to subsequent classroom experience."

Not surprisingly, none of the programmes with vicarious teaching have a reteach, nor is a reteach included in the other programmes I looked at where all the students teach. Wringe (1977) expresses a fairly common point of view about the reteach when, referring to his own programme at Keele, he says "experience shows this to be unnecessary once a student has grasped where he or she went wrong," and he suggests that improvement in a student's teaching seems to depend more on fullness of discussion about his lesson rather than on a reteach. This is also supported by Beattie at Liverpool who, at the time when he wrote his article on 'Microteaching in the training of teachers of modern language' (Beattie and Teather, 1971), generally did have a reteach, but who told me that he has done so less and less since he now feels that if the points made in the critique are sufficiently clear and obvious, no further purpose is served by reteaching.*

In connection with some of those programmes which originally did have a reteach but do not any longer, several related reasons for abandoning it we given. One was that students sometimes did not appear to do any better in a reteach, while in a couple of cases it was said that some students on occasion tended to do worse. Not surprisingly, in such circumstances it was felt that a reteach could be a depressing occasion and one that was therefor best avoided. In fact, one of the reasons for dropping the reteach at the New University of Ulster - as mentioned in Brown (1975a) - is that it was found that reteach scores were almost always lower than teach scores and students, moreover, disliked the reteach sessions (although it must be noted as Brown himself points out, that this finding was in respect of an immediate reteach when only fifteen minutes were allowed for replanning; whether it therefore applies more generally to any reteach is - as the present lecturer in charge of microteaching at the New University of Ulster thinks - questionable). Similarly, at Ulster Polytechnic the reteach was dropped because tutors often reported a deterioration of skill performance in it (although here again that may have reulted from insufficient time being available for adequate replanning).

2.2.4.2 Consideration of factors affecting the reteach session

The situation concerning the reteach is, then, somewhat confused. A decision whether or not to have one can only be taken for each individual microteachin programme, according to the aims of that programme and how valuable one therefore considers the reteach is likely to be in attaining them.**

If one believes that the main aim in a microteaching programme is for the student to understand and assimilate new modes of thought into his conceptual schemata as a pre-requisite for any lasting changes in behaviour, one may then feel that this can be attained without a reteach. The assumption behind this is also that the practice necessary for developing actual proficiency will come through later classroom experience. Alternatively, one may feel that with certain students (and for certain skills) a reteach can be valuable in providing further opportunity to develop understanding and acquire new forms of behaviour both from actually practising such behaviour a second time and from the additional discussion during the recritique. (This point of view is, of course, at variance with that of White (1975) which I quoted earlier.) It may also be thought that in some cases it is better for a student to achieve a minimum level of practical proficiency before he is left to attain a more complete proficiency, largely on his own, in the classroom. If, then, a tutor feels that there should be a reteach with some students, he may - because of particular circumstances and/or personal inclination - decide to have it as a regular feature of every microteaching session for all his students (assuming, of course, that everyone does teach), or with certain students only some of whom may even be asked to undertake more than one reteach if this seems desirable.*

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* At Moray House doubt was also expressed about the value of the reteach on in-service courses with experienced teachers. As Carver and Wallace (n.d.) say, they have tended to omit the reteach more especially when they were involved in a problem-centred or exploratory approach and so "wished to give greater weight to discussion and analysis rather than to a doubtfully attainable modification of behaviour."

** In an exploratory approach, one may feel with Carver and Wallace (n.d.) that a reteach is not very important. On the other hand it may still be valuable in such an approach for trying out alternative ways of doing something which have been suggested in the critique. In this case the reteach may be by a different student from the one who originally taught, as in the microteaching sessions of one EFL tutor who occasionally has a very informal kind of 'reteach' during the critique by students who wish to show alternative procedures to that already presented.

However, even if a tutor feels that a reteach might be valuable, he still has to consider whether its introduction would necessitate changes in other parts of the programme and, if so, whether these changes would be worth making in order to accommodate the reteach. As I have mentioned, some tutors - such as those at the New University of Ulster and Bulmershe - have decided that in their own particular circumstances, they are not. It may often be unlikely that a tutor feels sure about what is best to do, and a good deal of actual experimentation may be necessary before a satisfactory solution is found.**

If it is decided to have some form of reteach, the question arises of when to schedule it. People differ widely over how soon it should come after the critique. For instance, at Stanford, following the ten minute critique, only fifteen minutes was allowed for replanning before the reteach; while at Aberystwyth a student who is asked to reteach may have only ten minutes in which to replan after a ten-minute critique (although assistance is given by the other students). On the other hand, some would feel that - as I mentioned in the case of the New University of Ulster - having only about fifteen minutes for replanning may be a reason for lack of success with the reteach. The lecturer in charge of microteaching there stressed that it was not in his opinion possible for a student - especially one in a state of tension - to replan in that length of time. Certainly, Brown (1975a) supports this when he says: "Reteach sessions immediately after teaching and viewing do not seem to warrant the extra cost and administrative difficulties. And students do not appear to enjoy or benefit from immediate reteach sessions."

In other programmes there is a longer interval between the teach/critique session and the reteach. At Jordanhill, the teach/critique session (on a TT basis) takes place during the morning for all the students in a group, who then have an hour or so during the lunch break for replanning prior to the reteach in the course of the afternoon. Some tutors, however, would feel that this is still too short a time. In the microteaching programme for Saudi Arabian students at Moray House, for instance, there is an interval of two days, partly for administrative reasons but also in order to allow the students plenty of time for replanning and because it is felt to be asking too much of a student emotionally in expecting him to reteach very soon after a critique session.* At Stirling, after a good deal of experimentation, the interval was lengthened to a full week to give students ample time for replanning and for consultation with their tutor if they so wish before the reteach. With this system, Professor Duthie told me that, although he could not honestly say that there were always signs of improvement, there was certainly no evidence to suggest that Stirling students did worse on the reteach or became dispirited in the way students at the New University of Ulster have been reported as doing.

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* However, as Politzer (1969) points out, if good performances are exempt from reteaching, a request to reteach may have a negative effect on a student's attitude.

** However, in a vicarious microteaching situation where there is not an opportunity for everyone to teach, although there may be advantages for the individual teacher if he is given a chance to reteach, the group as a whole will probably benefit as much or more from discussing additional teaches by other students as from discussing any reteaches by the original teachers.

There seems, then, to be a quite widespread feeling that the reteach (if there is one) should come after a sufficient length of time to allow for emotional recovery, and replanning by the student. Exactly how long to allow will, however, need to be decided according to student preferences and administrative constraints within each particular microteaching programme.

2.3 Forms of transitional microteaching

Since it is obviously a very great leap for a student to make from single microlessons to regular teaching, several British institutions provide 'bridging' experiences as an extension to their microteaching programmes. In this final section on microteaching I shall consider such 'bridging' procedures, looking firstly at those which consist of fuller but nevertheless discrete lessons (2.3.1) and then at those which consist of lessons that are not only fuller but also interconnected (2.3.2).

2.3.1 Programmes of fuller unconnected lessons

2.3.1.1 General microteaching programmes

The 'bridging' procedure may consist of increasing the number of skills in a particular teach. For instance, at Stirling in the eighth and final week after each of the skills have been practised separately, the students give a 30-minute lesson when all the skills are combined. At the New University of Ulster, again after all the separate skills have been practised, in the last two weeks of the microteaching programme each student teaches two lessons in which these skills are combined.

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* At Moray House on the microteaching programme for Ivorean teachers where there was formerly a reteach, only fifteen minutes were at first allowed for replanning. This, however, resulted in too much of a rush and subsequently an interval of one week was estblished between the teach/critique session and the reteach. Carver and Wallace (n.d.) say that their own preference when having a reteach is for a gap of a week since this longer interval seems to reduce the tension in the situation and gives the student an opportunity to consult his tutor before the reteach.

The combination of the skills may also be a cumulative process throughout the programme rather than occurring just at the end. At Ulster Polytechnic prior to the 1978-79 session (when, as I mentioned earlier, a new programme consisting mainly of discrimination training was introduced), there was what was called 'mini teaching'. As described in Hargie et al (1978), the teaching skills were progressively recombined during the course of the semester's microteaching programme while the length of a lesson was gradually increased from 5 to 30 minutes and the number of pupils from 5 to 25, as shown below:

Session	Activity	Length of teach
1	Introduction and familiarisation	
2	Pretape. Recording and reviewing	5 minutes
3	The skill of questioning	5 minutes
4	The skill of reinforcement	5 minutes
5	Integration of questioning and reinforcement	10 minutes
6	The skill of stimulus variation	10 minutes
7	Integration of questioning, reinforcement and stimulus variation	10 minutes
8	The skill of verbal explanation	10 minutes
9	The skill of illustration	10 minutes
10	Integration of verbal explanation and illustration	15 minutes
11	The skill of set induction	15 minutes
12	The skill of closure	15 minutes
13	Integration of all the skills	20 minutes
14	Integration of all the skills	20 minutes
15	Post-tape. Comparison of pre- and post-tapes	10 minutes
16	Full lesson in college	30 minutes

In 1978-79 the microteaching programme at Ulster Polytechnic was changed so that, after eleven sessions devoted to discrimination training in the various skills, each student teaches on three occasions. On the first two of these, his lesson lasts for 15 minutes with six or seven pupils; while on the third occasion it lasts for 25-30 minutes with about 14 pupils.

2.3.1.2 Language microteaching programmes

In the usual kind of microteaching session, all the students who perform teach the same type of lesson segment. The final session(s) of some programmes, however, are designed as a transition to teaching practice and involve a team - usually of three students but occasionally of more - which jointly plans a lesson with individual members subsequently executing successive stages of it. With each member teaching for perhaps 5 to 10 minutes, a 'full' lesson of about 20-30 minutes results. For example, in one instance of this kind of team teaching that I came across, the first student presented a new grammatical item, the second one had it practised through various drills, while the third encouraged the class to produce it in free conversation activities; in another instance, the first student introduced a dialogue, the second asked questions about it line by line, and the third required pupils to re-tell the gist of it; while in a further instance the first student introduced a reading passage, the second supervised the pupils' reading of it, and the third questioned them about it. At Hull I witnessed a microteaching session when six students in turn each taught for about five minutes successive parts of a pre-Christmas French lesson on the nativity intended for first-year secondary pupils.

(1. introduction of new vocabulary; 2. introduction of new names; 3. questions requiring production of new vocabulary; 4. practice of new vocabulary with known prepositions; 5. reading and writing new vocabulary; 6. general question and answer work on the complete nativity scene).* For the subsequent critique sessions, the organisation in programmes where real pupils are used has to be after all the teaches; in other cases where peers are used, a critique can come after each teach (the TC arrangement) or at the end of the whole lesson (the TT arrangement).

This kind of team-teaching microteaching is referred to by some tutors as the 'Liverpool' model because of its use in the modern language department there which has been decribed by Beattie and Teather (1971). Tutors that I spoke to who practise it were enthusiastic about it since, as Broughton (1979) says: "This linear form of team-teaching has the advantage of bringing to microteaching both a greater degree of cooperation between teachers than in the major model, and brings to their consciousness the varying pace and rhythm of larger teaching units." In actual fact, however, the degree of cooperative planning seemed to vary between the programmes that I looked at. In some, students in a team might all participate in planning each member's part of the lesson so that the whole was truly a joint undertaking; while in others, the students were simply assigned or chose their respective parts which they then prepared completely on their own.

Some of the ML and ELT microteaching programmes that I encountered consisted entirely of the 'Liverpool' model. However, in a couple of cases, the reason for this was also because genuine adult learners were used as pupils and naturally expected to receive 'proper' lessons (which also meant that the lessons were considerably longer than the more usual 20-30 minutes). For instance, at Keele where university secretaries and other employees form the classes, each student in a team of three teaches for twenty minutes (= a total of one hour); while at the International Teacher Training Institute where foreign students are used, each of the six microteachers performs for fifteen minutes (= a total of 1½ hours).**

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* This kind of team-teaching microteaching is therefore different from that which I came across in a couple of programmes when two or possibly more students continue with the same work (for example, one might tell the first part of a story and another the second, or one might present the first three examples of a grammatical item and another the next three). It also differs from the kind of microteaching which involves a succession of discrete parts that follow each other to form a lesson (such as that decribed by Phillips (1975) when groups of 4-5 Greek-Cypriot teachers planned primary-level lesson in which the first teacher might begin the lesson and play a game, the second revise certain structures using a flannelboard, the third introduce a new pattern using pictures or blackboard, the fourth practise a known structure using a tape-recorded mini-dialogue, and the fifth end the lesson with a son or a piece of drama).

** Krumm (1973) describes a very similar situation in ML microteaching at the University of Tubingen. At the International Teacher Training Institute, however, this arrangement only lasts for (each afternoon of) the first two weeks. In the third week, only three students share the 1½ hours teaching each afternoon (with the other three observing), while in the fourth week, only two students teach for about one hour each (with the other four observing). The number of learners forming the class remains the same throughout.

2.3.2 Programmes of fuller connected lessons

As well as practising 'fuller' lessons in terms of individual content (and also perhaps with a gradually increasing number of pupils in the class), the lessons themselves may be connected to form a complete sequence. Allen and Ryan (1969), for instance, describe the 'microclass' at Stanford when three or four trainees from the same discipline are jointly responsible for planning and executing a sequence of twelve lessons, each lasting 20-25 minutes, on successive days to the same four or five pupils.

At Stirling, there is a 'Link Practice' between the end of the microteaching programme and the beginning of the first teaching practice. This 'Link Practice' is still conducted within the education department (rather than out in schools), and students form teams consisting of two or three members all of whom have the same teaching subject. Each team is responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating a sequence of eight 30-minute lessons which are given at the rate of one a week to the same class of 15 final-year primary pupils.* The 'Link Practice' runs concurrently with a course on teaching strategies which deals with how lessons interrelate within larger units of work. Each team organises the teaching amongst its members as it wishes (but bearing in mind the departmental instruction that every student must on some occasion teach the whole class of fifteen pupils rather than just small groups of them); and a video-recording is made of each lesson for discussion purposes in a subsequent critique session (at which a subject tutor may or may not be present). Obviously no reteaches are possible in such a situation, and any necessary changes are implemented in the next lesson. One of the modern language tutors at Stirling told me that he considered the Link Practice especially valuable for students in his own discipline who can thus try out ways of getting their pupils to combine newly-learnt language with what they already know. And as Professor Duthie says in the recent film about microteaching at Stirling: "I think that if microteaching were used as the only preparation technique and we didn't have a Link Practice as a bridging experience, there would be a real risk that students would fail to see the relevance of microteaching in the teaching setting in schools."**

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* The possible problems concerned with determining the precise level of proficiency of the pupils do not, therefore, arise since no foreign languages are taught in local primary schools and all the pupils are genuinely complete beginners.

** What is microteaching? (British Council, 1979)

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